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February/March 2025

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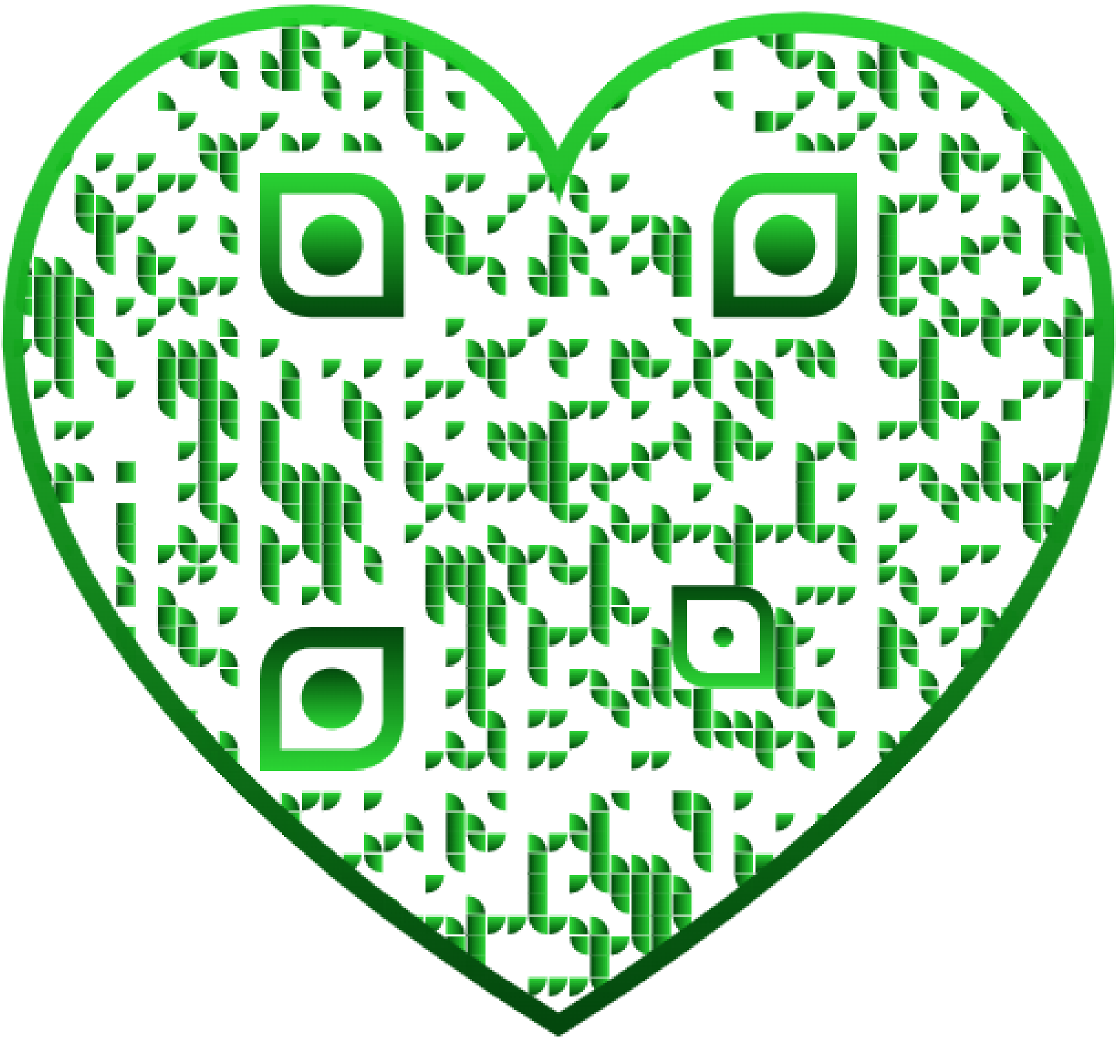

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NOT SO GREAT EXPECTATIONS

MIKE O'CONNOR, EDITOR

Apart from a couple of portrait jobs and a pair of weddings, I barely picked up my camera last year. But it wasn't until the Christmas break that I realised it may have been an even longer time since I'd photographed something just for the sake of it, with no expectations about how the images would look or be used.

It also got me thinking about how different things are with digital photography and how we use it to record our lives. I remember those dinky compact cameras we'd take away on our holidays as kids, and how they were the only real record of what happened. My parents bringing home a neatly stacked pile of prints in one of those glossy envelopes, mum meticulously filing the images, good and bad, in photo albums that us kids would pore over in years to come, and later, as we got older, shrieking in laughter at the faded shots of our parents wearing bell bottoms as we gawped at how much hair they had back then.

One from the smartphone. My daughters and their new unicorn on Christmas day.

Today our digital devices have totally changed all this – now it's so easy to fire away with your camera until everything lines up just right, and if it still doesn't look right, well you can probably make it look like it does in Lightroom. In my own photography this period has been wonderful for never missing moments, and as a result my own expectations for what I photograph have never been higher. At times, I've found myself thinking there's no point taking any images because they won't come out right, or it will just be frustrating if I do take something so I shouldn't bother. This is a place nobody wants to be with any creative pursuit.

So, this summer, whether it was by design or not, I left my 'normal' camera at home and just took some photos with my phone. Sure, plenty of them were pretty rubbish, but who cares? I only showed them to my family, and I found the experience really refreshing – and especially so as it felt like what photography should be about – something fun and spontaneous.

It's natural that our approach to creating will shift over time, and the expectations we place on ourselves will also shift as we grow as photographers. These are healthy things. But where it isn't healthy is when our creativity feels stifled by the restrictions we place on ourselves. I encourage you to try something different if you're feeling like this – it may be just the change you need. ✪

Mike

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2025

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AUSTRALIANPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

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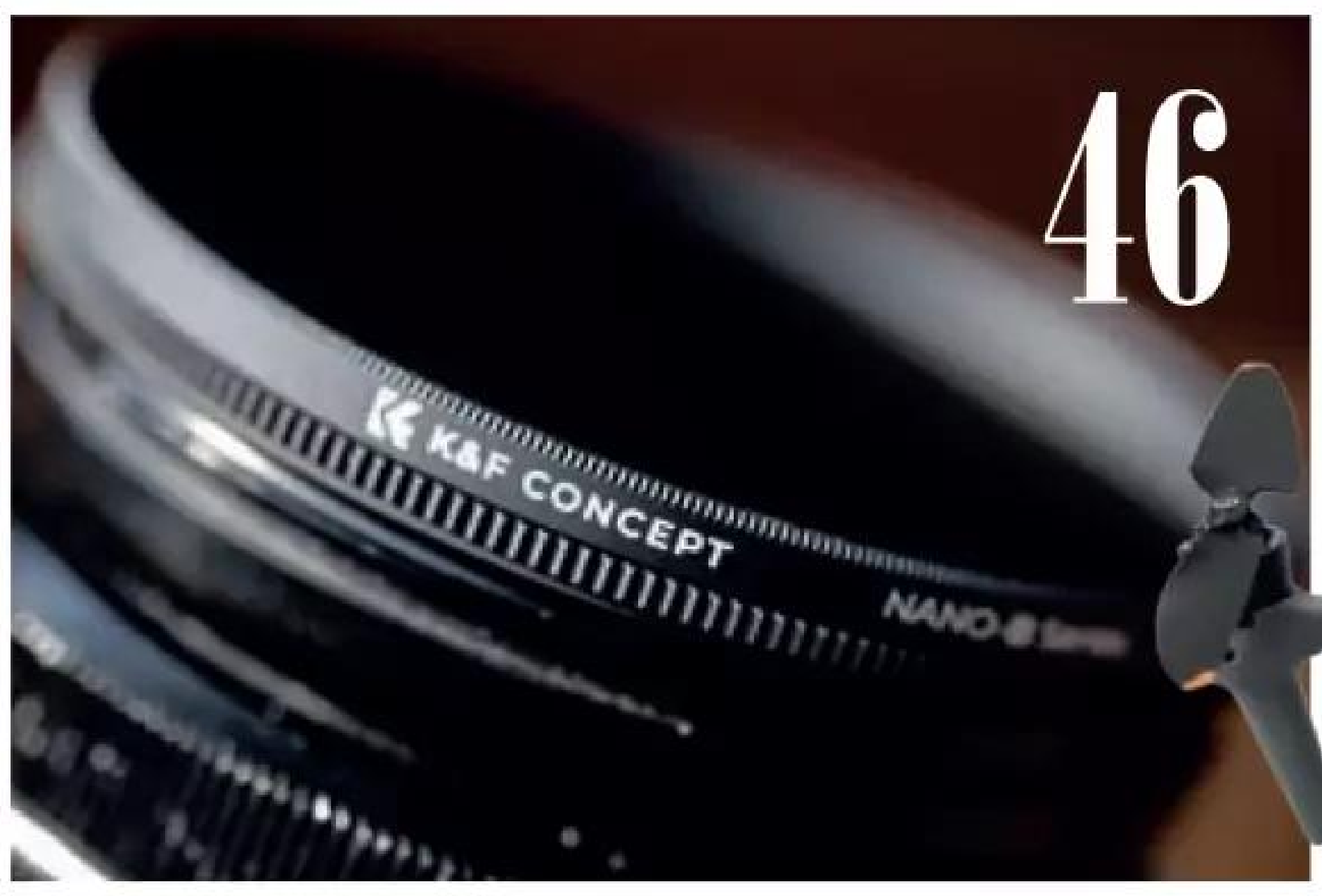
To tele or not? That is the question in this feature as Doug Gimesy unpacks the pros and cons of teleconverters, and the situations where you might be glad you packed one in your bag.

28 THE PLUCKY UNDERDOG

How do you go from photographing amateurs kicking a pigskin around to the absolute pinnacle of the sport in just a few short years? Well, Nikki Verbakel knows a thing or two about it. She talks to Ray Doherty about her remarkable NFL journey.

34 JOIN THE CLUB

Camera clubs are a great way to expand your photography and your friend network. We look at some of the reasons why now is a great time to join your local.



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Cheap filters are dime-a-dozen these days, so when we find one that actually gives good results, we need to tell you about it! Steve Thomas has the lowdown.

48 REVIEW: DJI AIR 3S

DJI's tiny Air 3S still sports a big 50MP sensor and plenty of drone flying safety features to make it a compelling entry level option. Sam Edmonds takes it to the skies.

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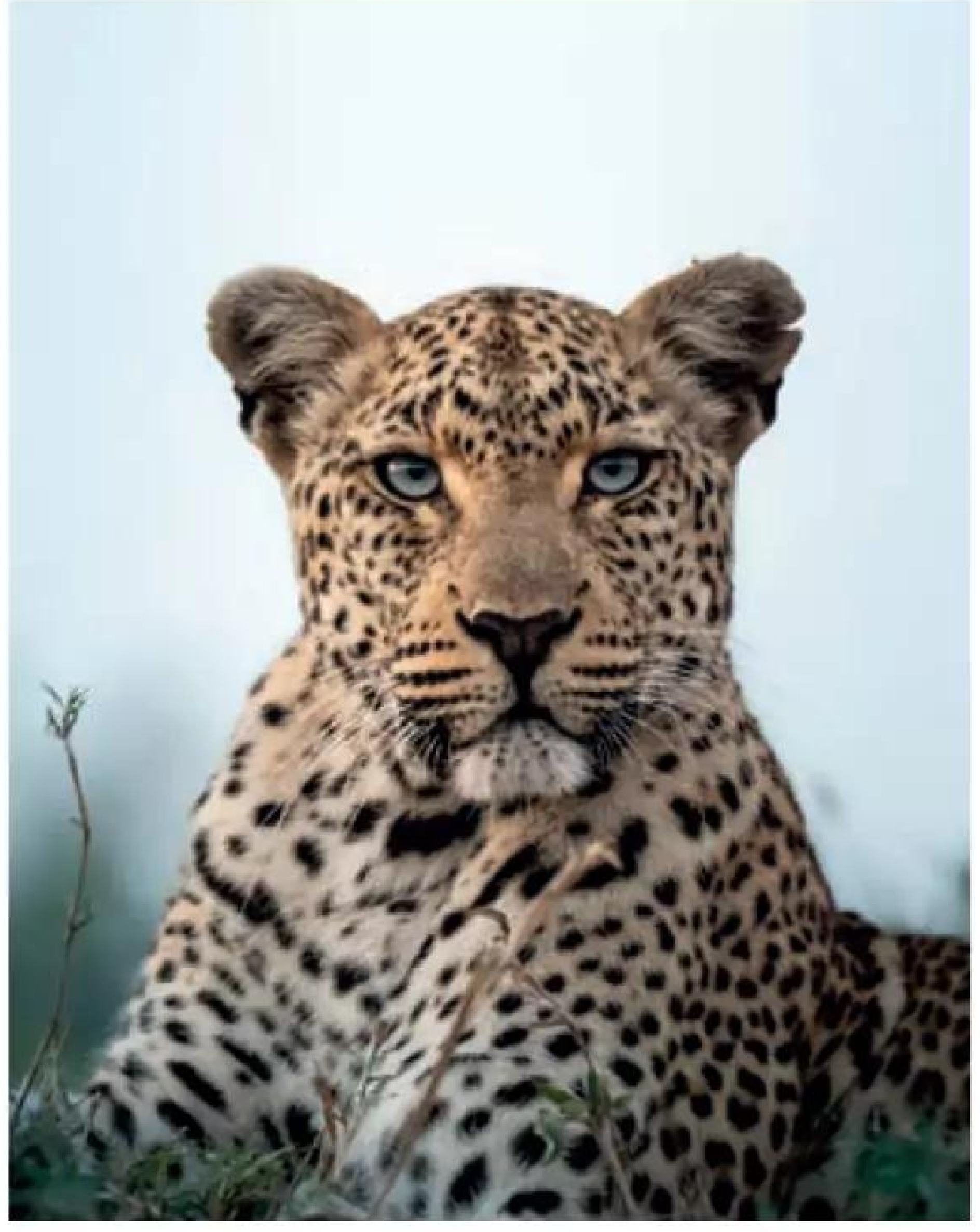

THIS ISSUE'S COVER

After more than 40 game drives to Africa, Sydney photographer Ani Vemulpad still hadn't caught a glimpse of a Leopard. Determined to change that, he planned a trip in 2023 to see and hopefully photograph one. He was in luck, photographing Tiyani—a beautiful leopardess at Sabi Sands Game Reserve in South Africa. "It's a memory etched in my mind forever," he says. Sony A7IV, FE 70-200mm F2.8 GM OSS II lens @ 194mm. 1/800s @ f2.8, ISO 4000.

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QUICK SNAPS

ROBERT FRANK'S ICONIC PHOTOBOOK 'THE AMERICANS' GETS RE-RELEASE

To celebrate 100 years since the birth of Swiss American photographer Robert Frank, his iconic photobook *The Americans* is to be re-released.

Born in Zurich in 1924, Frank is best known for *The Americans*, first published in 1958, which gave rise to a distinct new art form in the photobook.

The book, which featured 83 photographs taken across the country and an introduction by Jack Kerouac, unveiled an America that had gone previously unacknowledged – confronting its people with an underbelly of racial inequality, corruption, injustice, and the stark reality of the American dream.

At its release *The Americans* was highly controversial – the work was described as featuring "grainy, blurry, muddy exposures, drunken horizons", and *Popular Photography* called Frank "a joyless man who hates the country of his adoption".

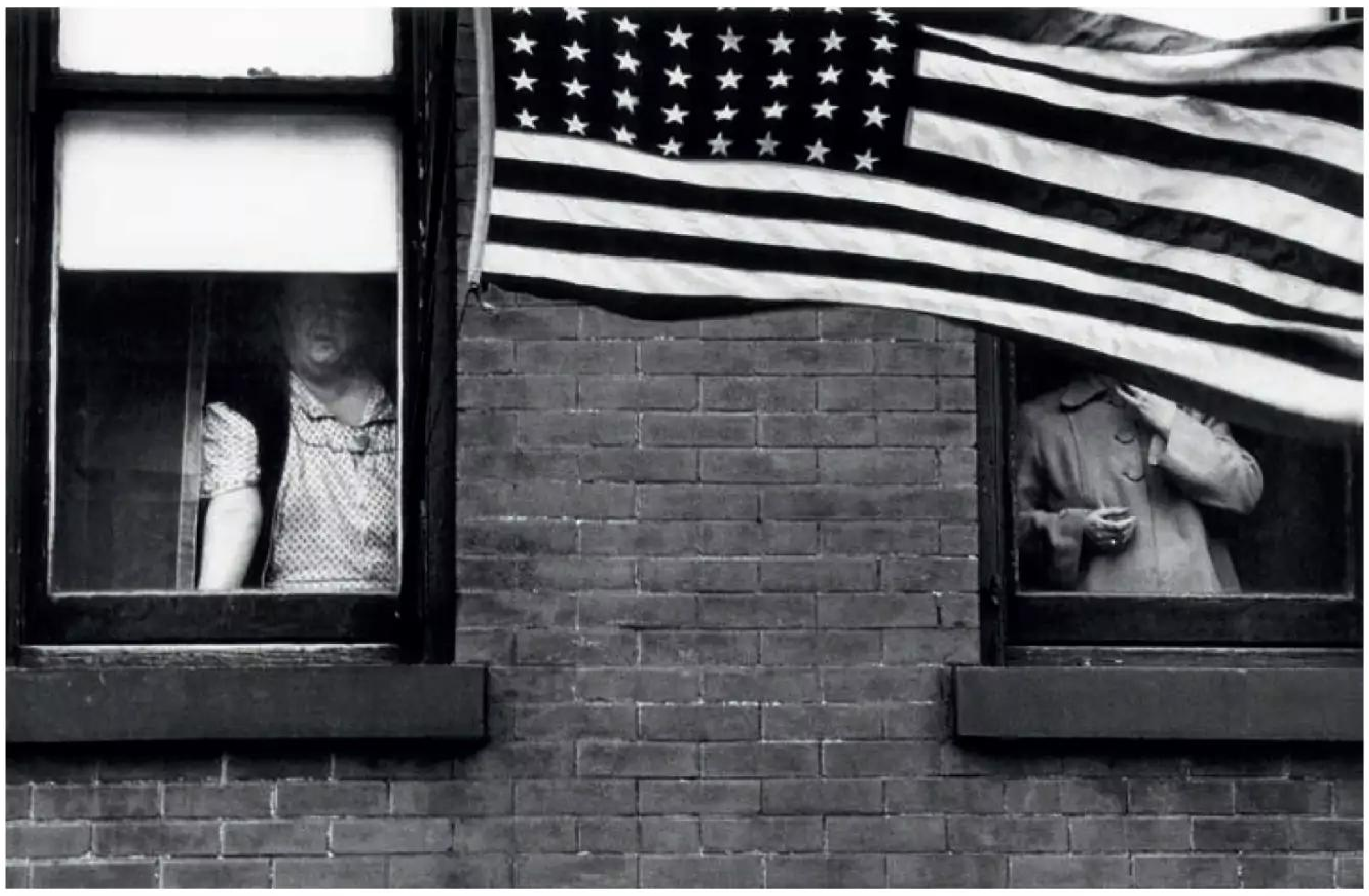
Part of the controversy involved the project itself – Frank was a European Jew, who, with the help of the Guggenheim Fellowship, had travelled more than 10,000 miles with his trusty Leica 35mm camera, and captured a raw, unfiltered postwar America as few wanted to imagine it.

Despite this, the book is now considered a classic, and has influenced subsequent generations of photographers, including Lee Friedlander, Nan Goldin, Danny Lyon, Joel Meyerowitz, Ed Ruscha, and Garry Winogrand.

Presented on the centennial of Frank's birth and coinciding with a major exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, the new version of the book has been released in a limited edition of 1,500 copies, and has been produced following the tritone printing from the 2008 edition for which Frank was personally involved in every step of the design and production.

Frank died in Nova Scotia, Canada, in 2019.

The 180-page book keeps the introduction by Jack Kerouac, and is available for $50 USD ($76 AUD). You can order it from Aperture.org.



ABOVE: An image from Robert Frank's *The Americans*. Aperture Press.

FUJIFILM ANNOUNCES TWO-DAY CREATOR SUMMIT IN SYDNEY

FUJIFILM Australia has announced the Creator Summit, a new two-day event designed to bring together Australia's content creation community of photographers, videographers, and creatives.

The summit, set to be held at Sydney's Luna Park on February 22nd and 23rd 2025 will feature keynotes, workshops, and hands-on experiences.

Fujifilm says the Creator Summit will feature keynote sessions and talks from leading content creators, with headlining speakers to be announced ahead of the event.

Workshops are set to be a key part of the event, including for the first time ever, a workshop on Luna Park's iconic Ferris Wheel.

Titled 'A View From The Top', this revolving, immersive experience will offer participants tips and tricks for capturing the Sydney Harbour skyline.

Tickets for the Summit are now on sale for $49. Each ticket includes access to keynote sessions, workshops, and partner hubs hosted throughout Luna Park. As part of the ticket, attendees will also receive a one-ride pass for the Ferris Wheel, and a Fujifilm goody bag packed with exclusive giveaways valued at over $270.

You can find out more at fujifilm-houseofphotography.com.au.

SONY DISCONTINUES AIRPEAK S1 DRONE

SONY has discontinued its Airpeak S1 drone, only three years after announcing the $9,000 USD ($13,500 AUD) flying device.

The Airpeak was compatible with all of Sony's mirrorless offerings, including the A1, A9, A7S and 7R series, but seemed to struggle with consumer cut-through – it never received particularly good reviews, and last year Sony unveiled a full-frame box camera designed for drones that bizarrely did not work with it.

The Airpeak's biggest challenge however was consumer drone juggernaut DJI, which remains the industry's most dominant player. Combine this with the relatively high cost of the Airpeak, and it was clearly a challenging product for the company to sell.

Despite this, Sony did seek to address some of the criticism of the Airpeak. A lighter gimbal and improved navigation features were released last year, alongside firmware updates, but it wasn't enough to ensure the drone's future.

"Due to recent changes in the business environment, sales of the Airpeak S1 and related products, except for some accessories, will end at the end of March 2025. Please see below for a list of products to be discontinued and details of the end of support, including repair services after the end of sales," Sony said in a translated statement on its corporate website.

That said, for owners wondering if they're now stuck with a $9,000 brick, there is some hope. Sony have said that it will continue to offer regular inspection and repair services, plus software maintenance, until March 31, 2030.

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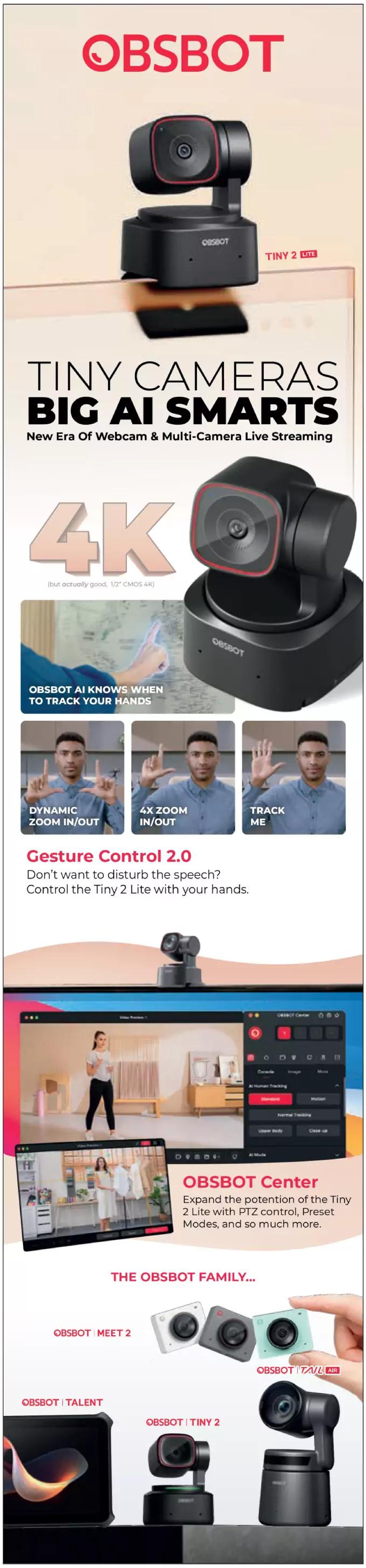

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LEICA SETS REVENUE RECORD

LEICA has recorded the highest revenue in the company's 100-year history, banking 554 million euros (891 million AUD) for the 2023/24 financial year, considerably more than 2023/24's already impressive 485 million euros ($780 million AUD).

In an era when camera companies are increasingly diversifying, it's all the more remarkable that Leica's core business, cameras, is still the primary driver of this growth, with the Leica Q3 in particular a hugely successful product for the German company.

That said, some of the revenue growth comes from Leica's Mobile Imaging segment, which includes the clearly successful acquisition of Norwegian company Fjorden Electra AS, known for its smartphone apps and accessories, along with the development of the Leica LUX photo app.

In addition, partnerships, such as with Chinese smartphone manufacturer Xiaomi and its latest Xiaomi 15 Series featuring Leica optics, are also key.

According to *Yahoo Finance*, revenue increased in all regions during fiscal year 2023/2024, with Asia leading at 25% growth.

"The past fiscal year has seen a further strengthening of the brand's position in strategically important markets. Today, Leica has an overall global network of 120 stores, 12 of which are located in Germany," the company says.

Leica will commemorate the 100th anniversary of its iconic Leica I camera later this year, and says it plans a variety of events celebrating photography at its Wetzlar headquarters and in its global network to mark the occasion.

RODE UNVEILS COLOURFUL THIRD-GEN WIRELESS GO MIC

RODE has unveiled its Wireless Go (Gen 3), the latest iteration of what Rode calls "the world's most popular wireless microphone".

Like its predecessors, the wireless mic includes digital (USB-C) and analog (3.5mm TRRS) outputs, meaning it works with a wide variety of devices.

Further, the transmitters can also pair to a range of other Rode Series IV compatible products, such as the RodeCaster Pro II and Duo and the new RodeCaster Video.

Design-wise, an integrated clip design allows the device to attach the mic to belts, collars, clothing, and cold shoe camera mounts. There's also an integrated LCD screen for monitoring battery and audio signal levels.

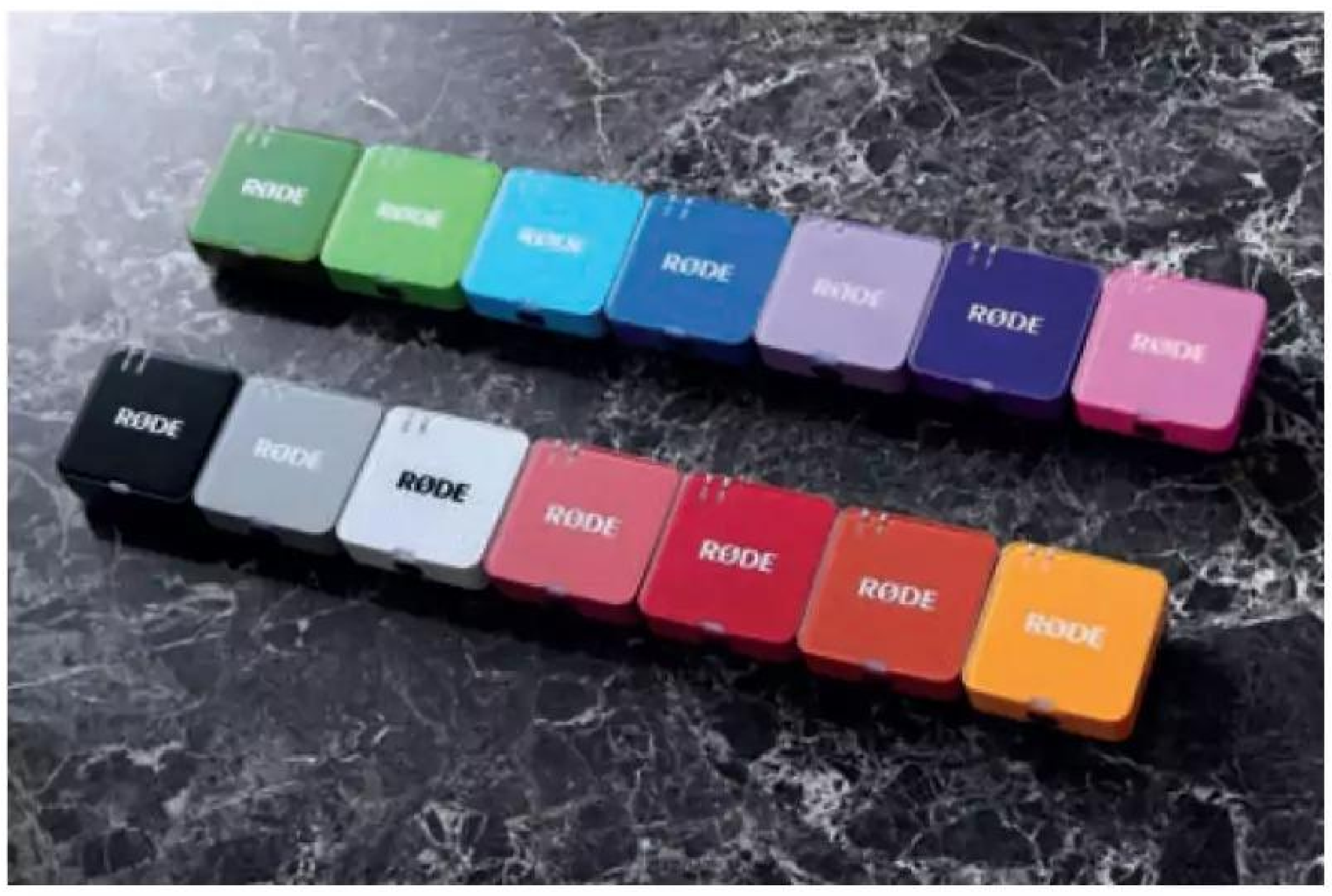
Transmission is run with 2.4 GHz digital transmission technology alongside 128-bit encryption, and Rode says it promises stable wireless audio recording at ranges up to 260 metres with line of sight.

Battery life is about seven hours per charge, and Rode has also launched a new charging and travel case, the Charge Case+. This protects and charges the mic system and delivers two full recharges.

The receiver has 32GB of onboard storage, good for about 40 hours of audio, and also has similar GainAssist technology as the Rode Micro.

With all that stuff out of the way, there's also colours(!) and lots of them.

Alongside the more commonly seen black and white, there is red, orange, green, purple, pink, blue, cobalt, clay, lilac, stone, rose, and moss.



The Wireless Go (Gen 3) will set you back $469, and the Rode Charge Case+ around $120. Find out more at rode.com.au.

THINK TANK LAUNCHES DARKLIGHT BACKPACKS

THINK Tank has launched a new series of backpacks, marking the company's further expansion of its Firstlight and BackLight bag series, which we've reviewed here at *AP*.

Designed for photographers who value adaptability, organisation and durability, the Darklight series is available in two sizes and two different colours, black and montane green, and in 20 and 14L capacities.

Both bags feature laser cut MOLLE panels with 'tactical' webbing rails. MOLLE (Modular Lightweight Load-carrying Equipment) is a versatile attachment system originally designed for military and tactical use.

It consists of rows of durable, reinforced webbing allowing users to attach just about anything, and is particularly useful for gear-heavy pursuits like photography.

According to Think Tank, the new bags mean users can seamlessly attach Think Tank modular pouches to expand carrying capacity.

Additional highlights of the DarkLight bags are a plush, air mesh harness system for comfort, interior dividers and pockets for efficient packing, and a variety of easy-access pockets for essentials like tablets, laptops, and small items.

There are also side pockets for water bottles or tripods, and the bags feature high-quality YKK zippers and weather-resistant materials. All materials are treated with a PFC-free DWR-0 coating.

The DarkLight 14L has an RRP of $329, and the 20L $389, and are available from usual retailers now.

You can find out more about the bags at Think Tank's website, thinktankphoto.com.

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'AUSTRALIAN LUSTRE' LOOKS TO THE PAST TO TELL A UNIQUELY AUSTRALIAN STORY

PHOTOGRAPHER Trent Mitchell has released a new photobook, *Australian Lustre*, which he describes as a 'photographic road trip around this strange place we call home'.

Although best known for his water photography, Mitchell has also gained a reputation for his wry yet sensitive take on the manmade world, zeroing in on its various idiosyncrasies and contradictions.

For *Australian Lustre*, the Queensland-based photographer travelled around the country, drawing links with the idyllic holidays of his childhood, contemplating the notions of time and memory, and exploring where we belong.

He says the book is more than 15 years in the making, and was shot on film across a variety of cameras, including a Zeiss Ikon, Leica M6, Leica MP, Mamiya 7, Contax T2 and a Nikonos V.

The limited edition, 320-page book is $95.

You can order it from trentmitchell.com.

SAMYANG ANNOUNCES AF 12MM F/2 LENS FOR CANON RF MOUNT

0.2m / 0.66ft
AF 12/2 RF-S
ø62

SAMYANG has announced a new lens for Canon's RF mount, as more brands begin to release lenses for the company's APS-C mount cameras.

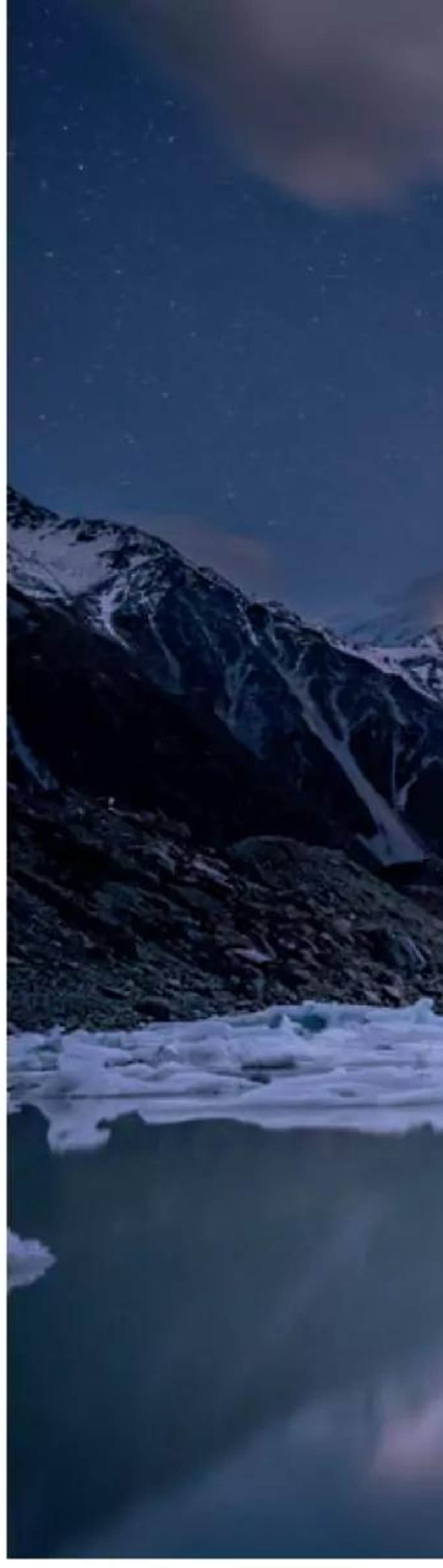
The Samyang AF 12mm F2 is a 19mm equivalent ultra-wide prime lens. Internally, it's made up of 12 elements in 10 groups, with three ED elements and two aspherical lenses. A 7-bladed aperture should deliver a decent bokeh and sunstars.

The lens is weather-sealed, and weighs 213g. It takes a 62mm filter and has a minimum focusing distance of 20cm.

Since Canon's announcement in April that the APS-C mount would be opened up to other manufacturers, we've seen a trickle of lenses for the mount – with Tamron announcing its first RF lens late in 2024.

The AF 12mm F2 will cost $449 USD ($696 AUD). ✪

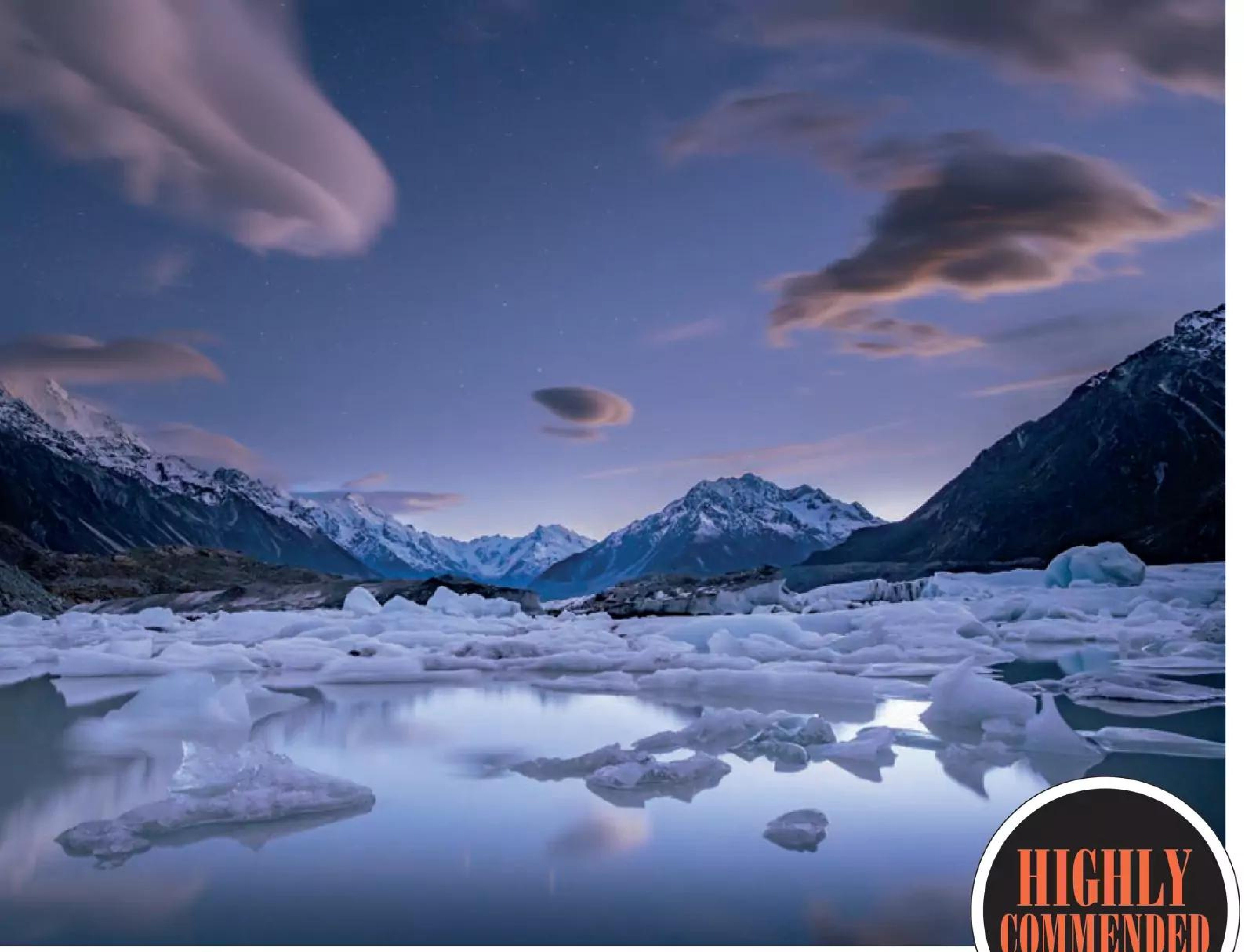
You can find out more on Samyang's website, lksamyang.com.



YOUR BEST SHOT

WILD PLACES

Having a look at the phenomenal images that made our shortlist this month, it’s clear there are plenty of beautiful places in the world to point your camera at. But what we really wanted to see were images that captured a feeling of untamed nature – places that few get to see, let alone photograph. These are our picks.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

DARREN WASSELL

Into Another World

EDITOR'S COMMENT

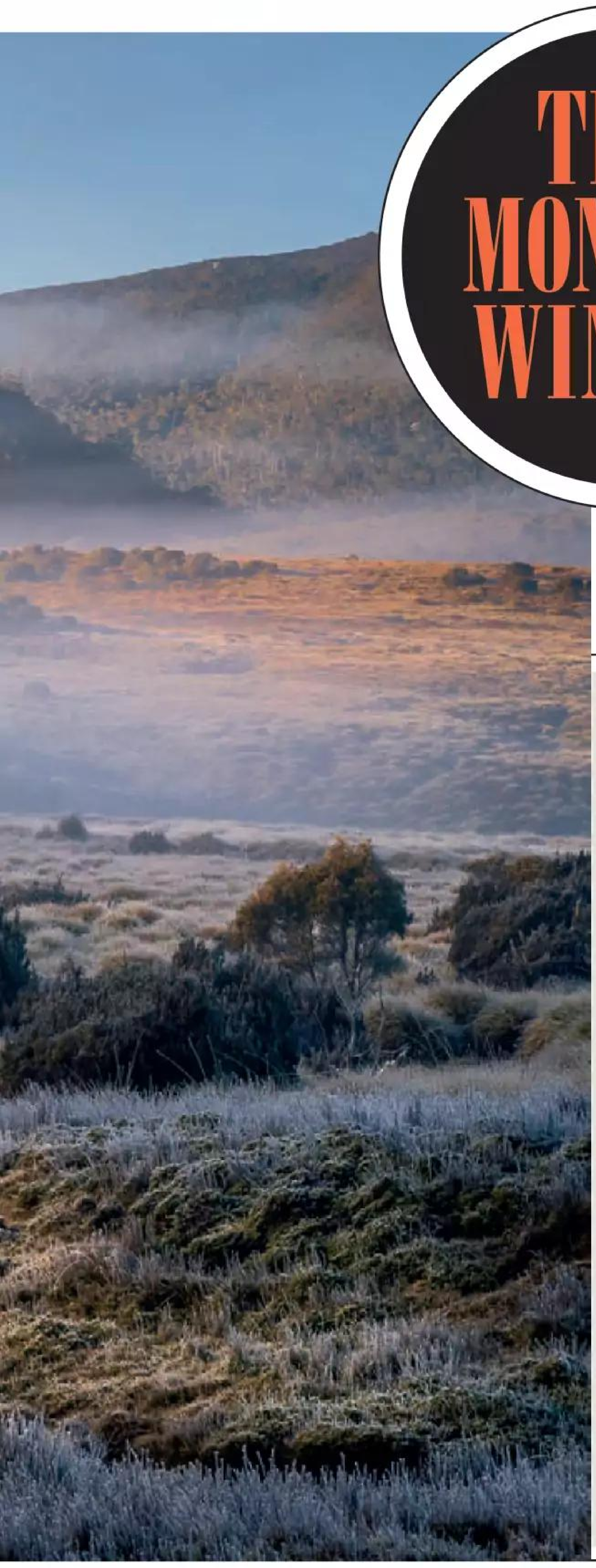
Captured on his last morning at Tasman Lake, New Zealand, Darren Wassell says this image with its stunning lenticular clouds made him feel as if he has entered another world.

It's also an image that's beautifully sharp front to back, which really helps accentuate the beauty of the landscape on show here. Combine this with a nice, subtle night sky that softens the light, and the result is a powerful landscape that really showcases the raw beauty of this iconic location.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Sony A7 IV, Sony 16-35mm GM lens @ 21mm. 15s @ f4, ISO 1600.

THIS MONTH'S WINNER



JOY KACHINA

Alpine Light NW Tasmania

EDITOR'S COMMENT

The rising sun casts a gentle glow as the mist lifts from the buttongrass in the alpine valley of Cradle Mountain National Park.

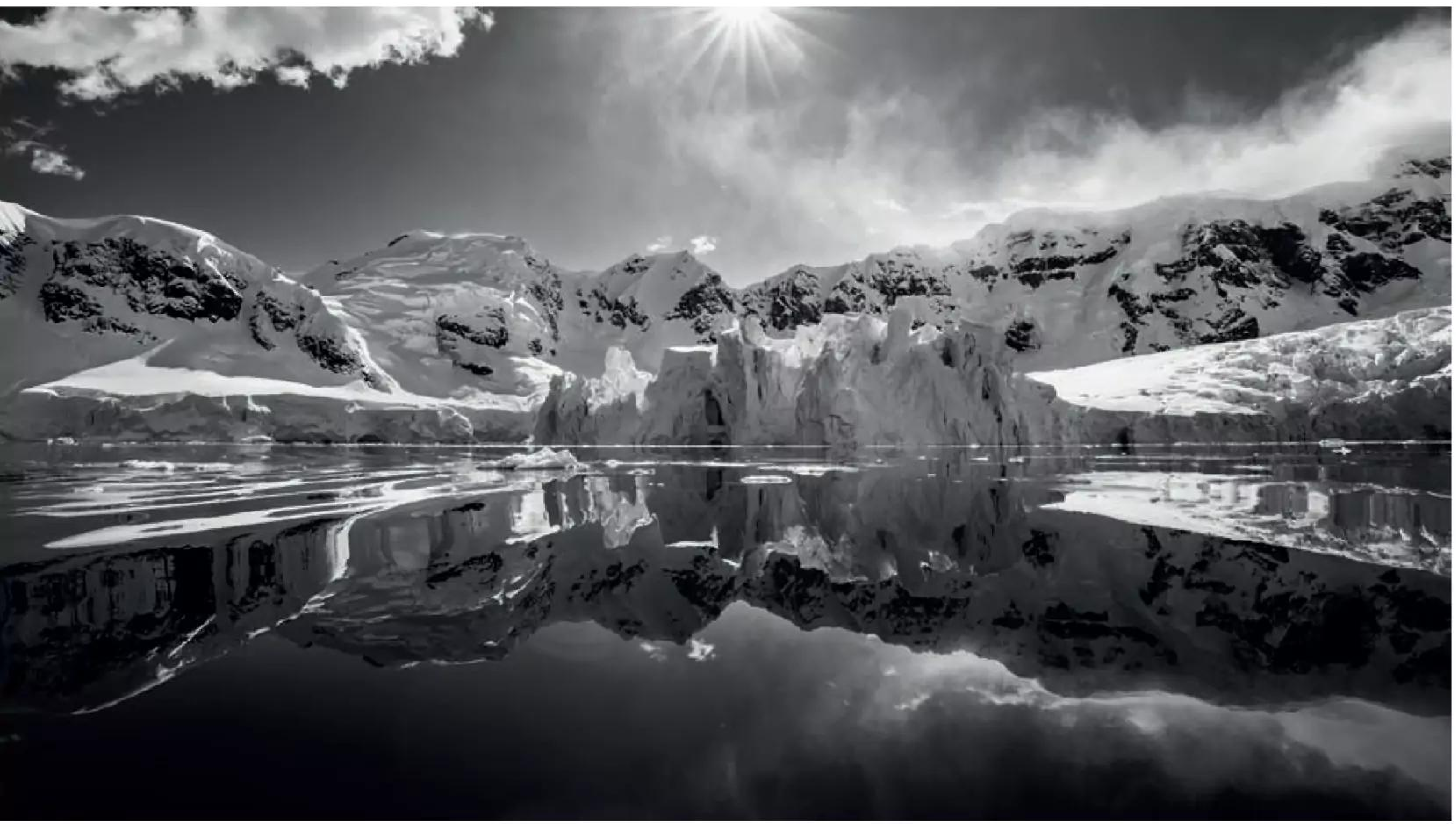
Joy Kachina's beautiful image captures everything that makes remote places special to photograph. There's lovely light, the perfect balance of an ethereal mist to soften the scene, and a nice, balanced composition that's been edited with a deft hand. This is a great shot that would look amazing printed large.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Nikon Z8, Nikkor Z 24-120mm f/4 S lens @ 68mm. 1/100s @ f8, ISO 400.

Thanks to the team at Blonde Robot, Joy Kachina has won a Think Tank DarkLight Backpack in 20L size. Also available in 14L, the DarkLight is the ideal blend of tactical style and everyday functionality. Whether you're an enthusiast capturing cityscapes or an advanced amateur exploring the great outdoors, it offers a durable and comfortable solution to carry your gear. Built with a laser-cut MOLLE panel and tactical webbing rails, this rucksack allows you to precisely configure your loadout.

SEE MORE AT THINKTANKPHOTO.COM



LINDA OLIVER

Bear Islands Icebergs

HOW I DID IT
In Scoresbysund in Greenland, near Bear Islands, spectacular blue and black icebergs float amongst the more usually encountered blue/white ones. Layered with freshwater ice coloured by glacial moraines, and glacial ice, their rugged shapes are influenced by the black bands absorbing more heat from the sun. These complex natural sculptures were breathtakingly beautiful.

TECHNICAL DETAILS
Canon R6, Canon EF 24-70 L lens @ 32mm. 1/800s @ f11, ISO 500.

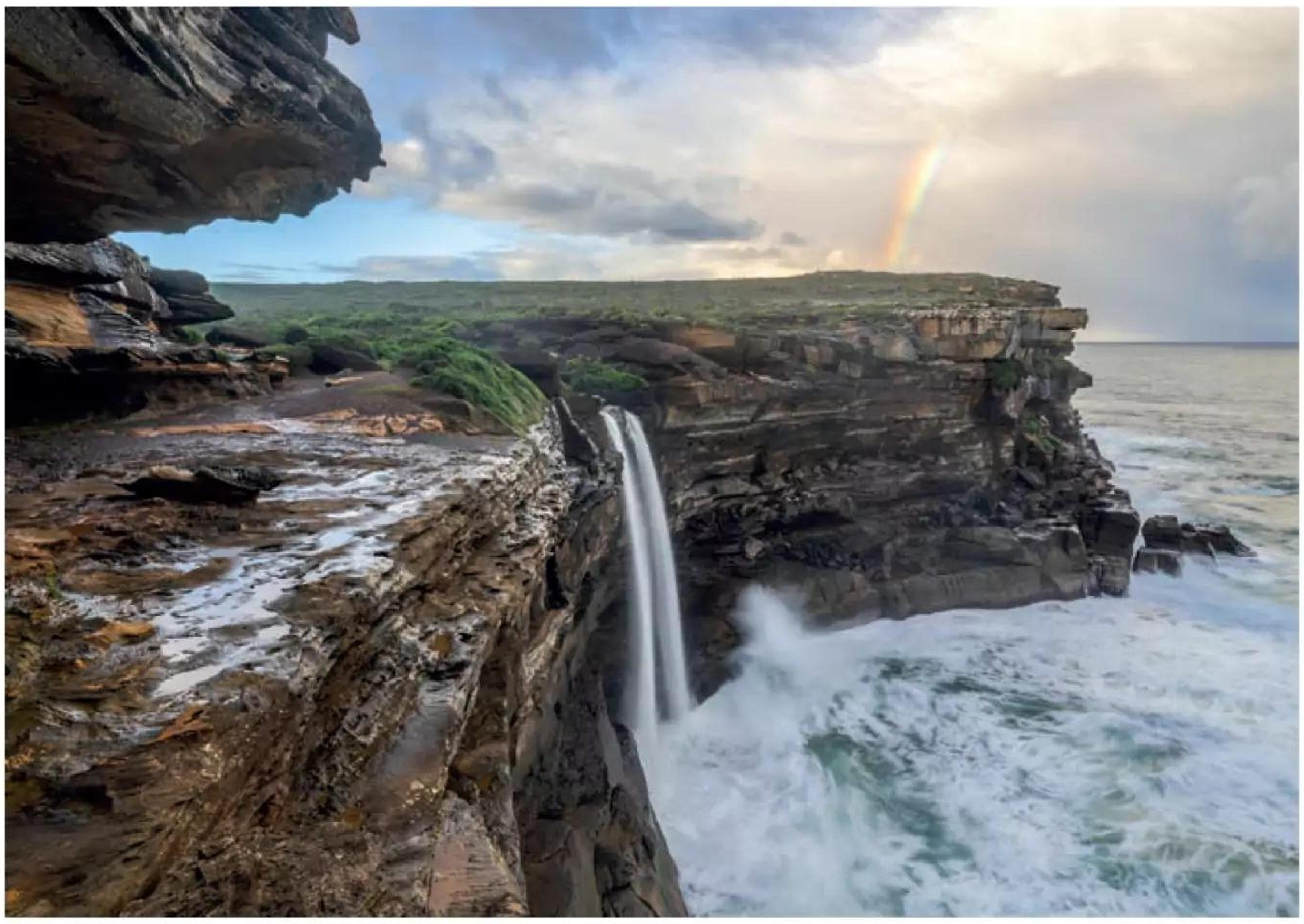
KEITH HORTON

Curracurrong Falls and Eagle Rock

HOW I DID IT
Curracurrong Falls is in the Royal National Park in New South Wales. It drops 82 metres from the top of the cliff to the South Pacific Ocean below. Eagle Rock (or Turtle Rock, as some prefer to call it) is near the top of the cliff on the right.

It takes the best part of an hour to walk here from the nearest car park at Wattamolla. The last part of the journey to the undercliff lookout where I took this photo is not marked and there is no path, but it is not difficult to find. It is worth waiting until a time when there has been a lot of rain, otherwise there is little water in the Falls.

TECHNICAL DETAILS
Sony Alpha A7R IV, Sony FE 20mm F1.8 lens. 1/8s @ f10, ISO 100 (focus stack).



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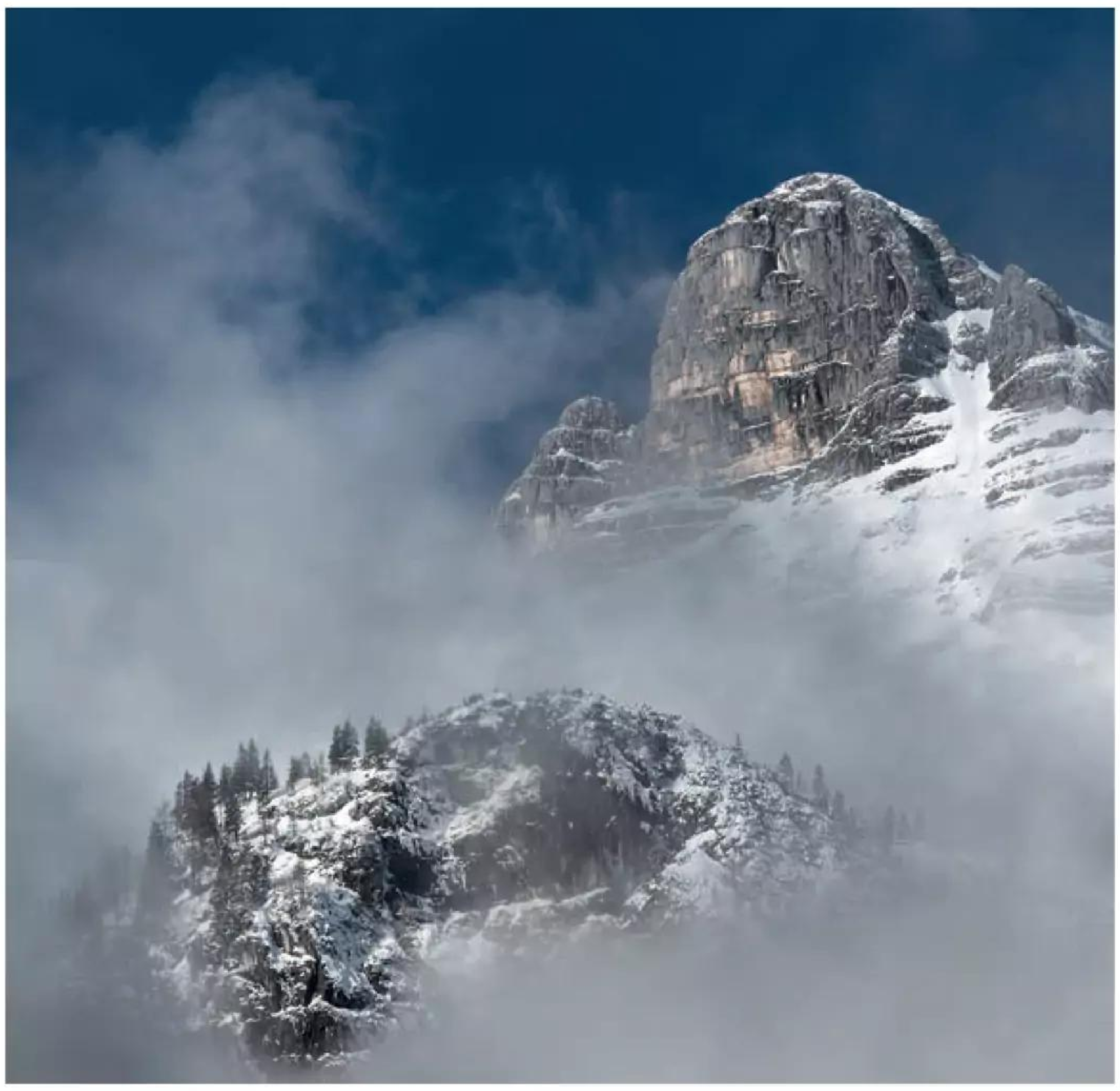


SUZANNE WACKER

Untitled

HOW I DID IT
This image was taken in the Bavarian Alps, near Ramsau, Germany. I liked the way the forest and mountain looked like they were hidden in the clouds.

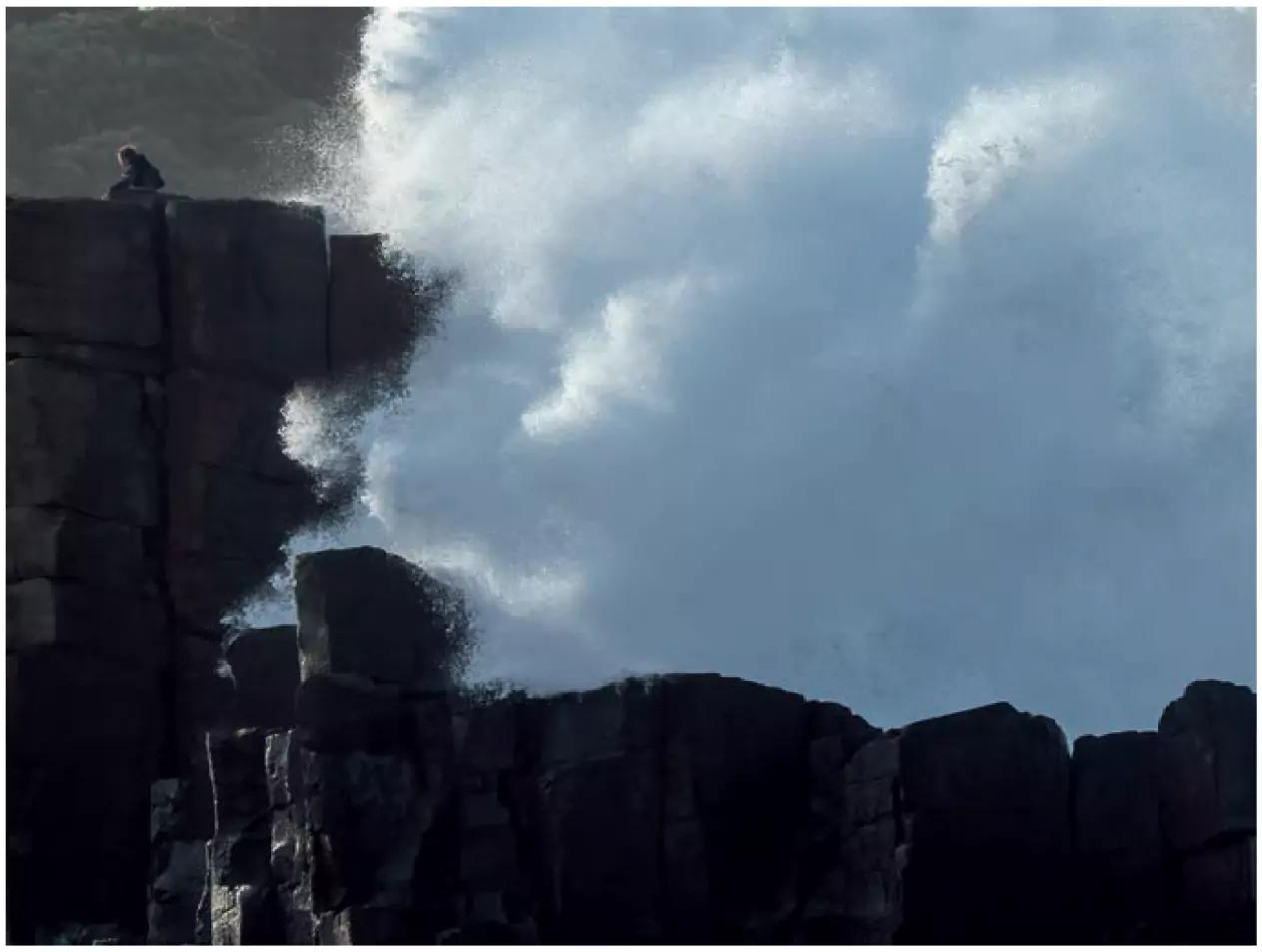
TECHNICAL DETAILS
Nikon D750, Nikon 28-300mm f/3.5-5.6 lens @ 135mm. 1/400s @ f10, ISO125.

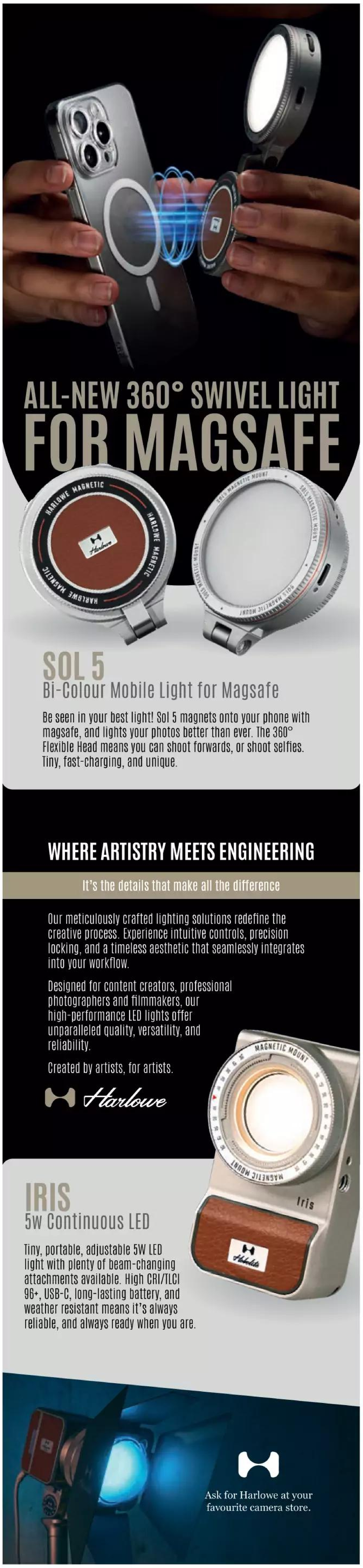
YVONNE YOUNG

Run for Your Life

HOW I DID IT
Taken at high tide at Bombo Quarry on the South Coast of NSW when the area was experiencing an East Coast low. This young lad was high on the cliff, almost mocking the huge waves. He made a quick decision to escape when seeing this monster wave quickly approaching!

TECHNICAL DETAILS
Olympus OMD 1 Mk III, 12-100mm lens @ 100mm. 1/1600s @ f7.1, ISO 500.





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31 May 2025

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31 July 2025

DECEMBER 2025
LIQUID
30 September 2025

ANNUAL 2026
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31 October 2025

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3. A maximum of three images can be entered per person.
4. Images must be in JPEG format.
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6. Please include the following information about your entry in the body of your email: Name, image title and up to 200 words explaining how you created your image. Please also include technical details including camera, lens, focal length, shutter speed, aperture, ISO, tripod (if used) and a brief summary of any software edits.

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For this shot, I knew the motion blur created by the long exposure in this image on a moving train in Korea would drag the eye into the frame.

BY MATTHEW CROMPTON

Smartphones are a great way to expand your creativity. Here's how.

SMARTER SHOOTER

Photography is, at its heart, a toolkit of a few simple techniques executed with almost limitless variation. But in our gear-obsessed culture, it's easy to believe that another spendy piece of kit will make you into a better photographer. Yet the truth is the reason we take uninteresting photos usually has far more to do with inadequate technique than with inadequate gear.

Here's an idea then: take the gear out of the equation as much as possible and focus on technique instead. How? By using the camera you always have with you: your phone!

As a tool for practicing photographic composition, a smartphone has numerous advantages. For one thing, it's all viewfinder. Better yet, it doesn't require you to fool around with settings, meaning you can devote 100% of your attention to composition. And remember that old adage about 'the best camera being the one you have with you'? It's wiser than you think.

You can practice any sort of composition using a phone camera, but what it works best with is stuff that takes advantage of the big, flat, graphic presentation its giant screen affords. If your composition isn't compelling on that screen, chances are it won't be on your monitor either.

Ready to jump in? Try working on the following four simple phone-photography techniques.

FRAMING

The human eye is a curious thing. Like a house cat being magically drawn to sit in any cardboard box placed in its environment, the eye craves confinement. Boxing in the subject of a photo by using other elements of the composition to frame it is intrinsically satisfying, and easy to practice. Indeed, virtually anything that you can shoot 'through' represents a possible opportunity to employ a framing technique. A doorway, window or hole in a wall are all great natural frames to shoot through in order to enhance and add interest to your subject. By placing other types of elements on the edge of your photograph, heaps of other things can serve as frames as well – tree limbs, leaves, architectural elements or even people are all fair game.

Though the photograph itself naturally presents a bounded view of reality by excluding everything outside of the viewfinder, that effect can be magnified by technique. When you're out walking around with your phone and you see an interesting subject, look for a frame. You might be surprised at how many good options there are.

LEADING LINES

While the eye loves to be confined, it also loves to be led. A strong line at the edge of the frame that draws the eye into the centre of the image is one of the simplest techniques to create a compelling photograph. The corners of the frame are a natural spot to place these lines, but any border can work with the right subject. I always find that leading lines present especially strongly on a phone screen, reducing the real-world objects in the viewfinder into simple geometric elements. Think of the way that even a postcard-sized print of Hokusai's *Great Wave* painting immediately draws the eye with its sinuous leading lines, or how Da Vinci's *Last Supper* instantly focuses the composition with its straight, geometric angles.

For practice, try going about this two ways: first, by finding a subject and then looking for nearby elements that can be used to lead the eye to it. And second, by noticing pleasing lines in your environment, and moving the frame around to see if they can be brought into visual symmetry around a point of focus.

BUILDING UP THE FRAME

A photograph with only one interesting feature is unlikely to win any prizes. Yet when presented with a compelling subject – the thing that first grabs your eye – it's easy to fixate on that feature to the exclusion of important supporting details. These structural 'helpers in the frame' are often what turn an okay photograph into a good one, and a good photo into a great one. It's a key part of making your images 'graphic'.

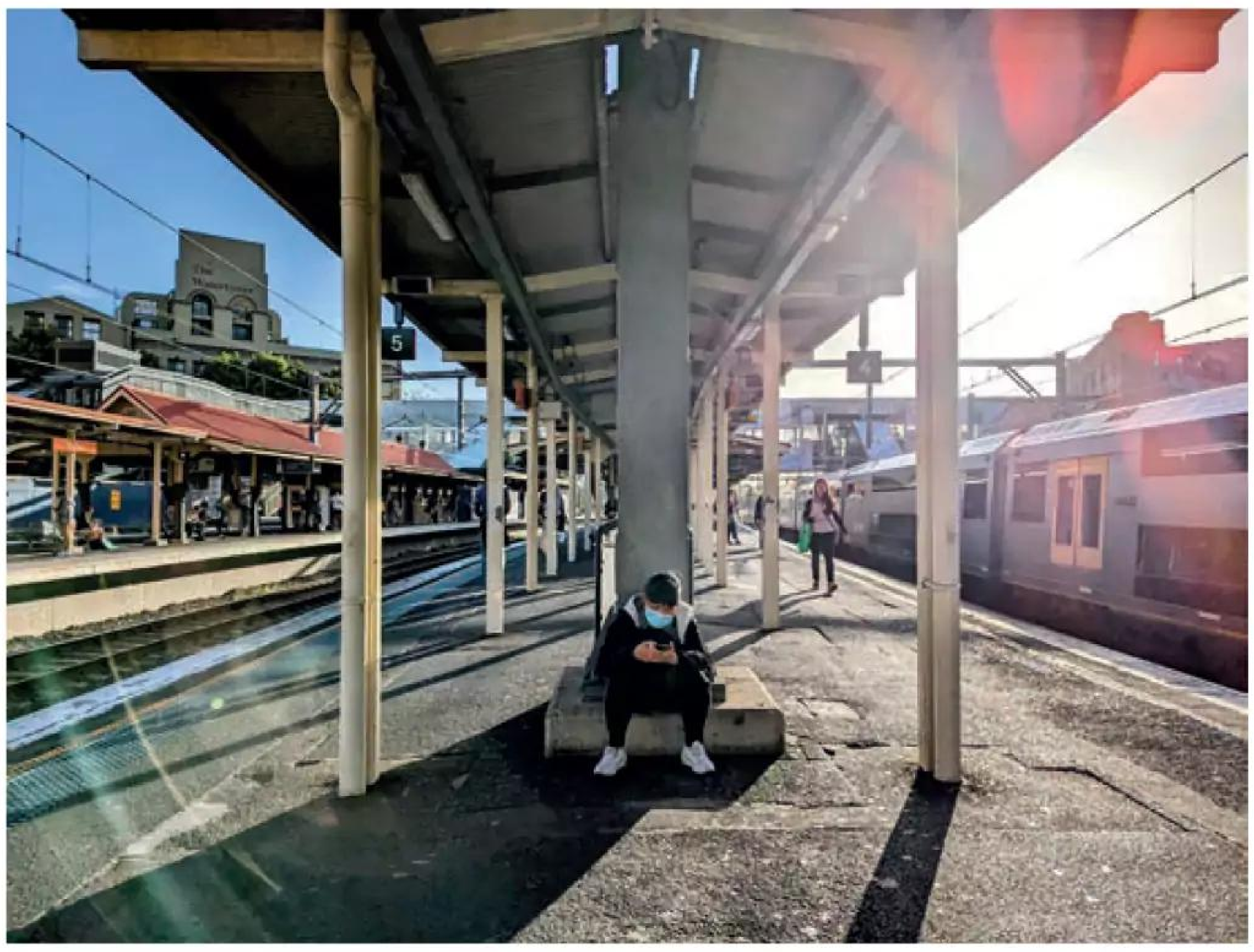
The all-viewfinder interface of a phone is great for seeing if the frame is well structured, or if it's lacking something. A big dead space in a 6-inch screen really shows. This isn't to say that you want a photo that's jumbled and busy, but one where there's a pleasing balance of elements. The key to practicing this one is to look at your screen and be able to identify when a photograph is 'missing something'. Do you need to build up the frame a bit more to make the photo compelling? Do you have a great subject but no visual interest around it? Use your feet to get a better view that puts some structure in the frame to balance it out.

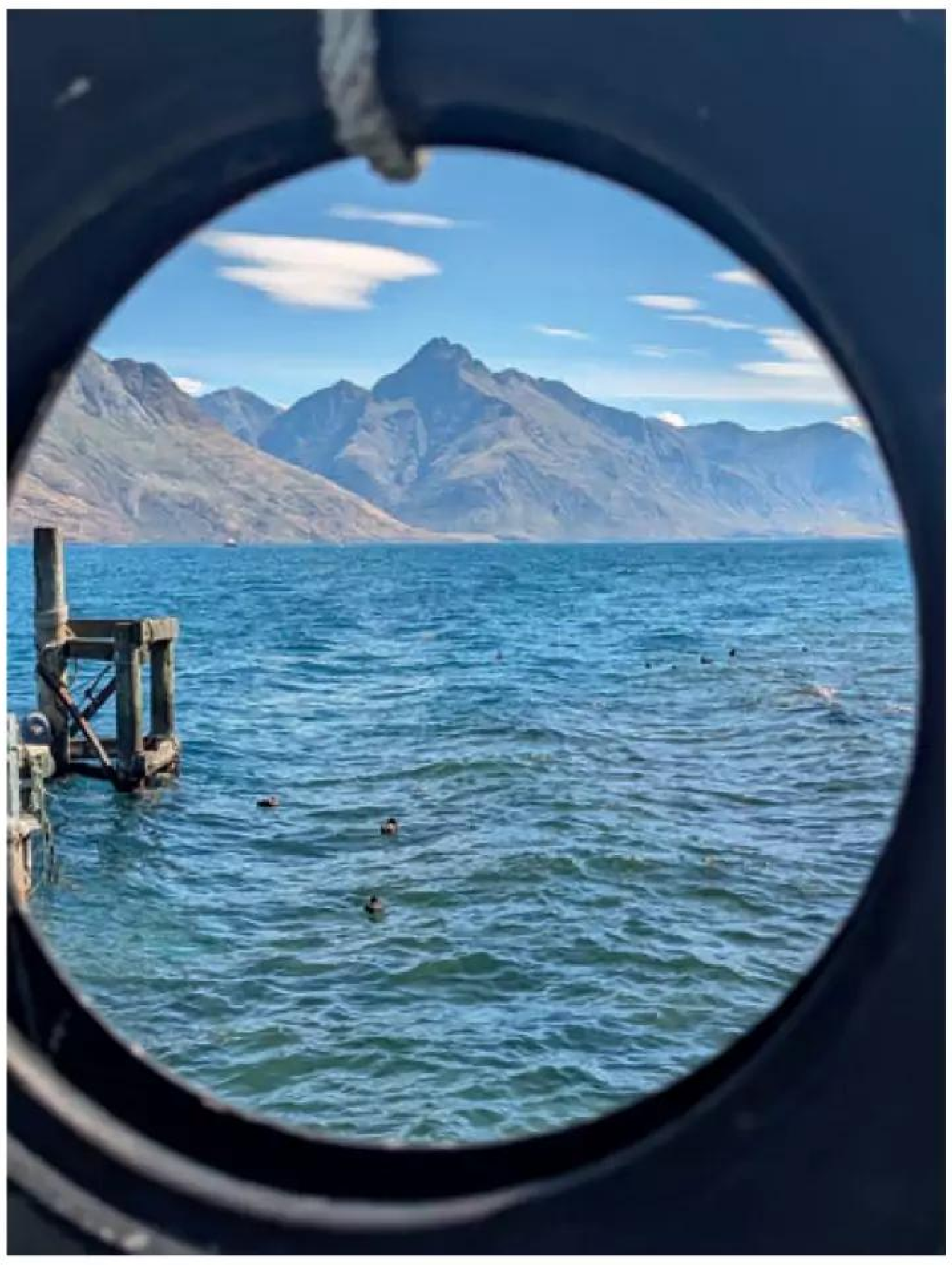
PHOTOGRAPHING PEOPLE

Shooting people is all about the moment, capturing a gesture, pose or expression that's instantly compelling. Unfortunately, pointing a chunky camera with a hulking 24-70 at people often ruins that moment. A phone camera, however, is so commonplace that for most of us, its presence barely registers. This means it's the perfect tool to hone your technique for taking photos of people.

Unless you're going full stealth mode (and in my experience this seldom yields the best results), photographing other human beings is a social skill at heart. This means intentionally engaging with your subject to make them feel comfortable and at ease (and therefore less likely to pull a face when you're about to make an image). Humour is my personal go-to technique for establishing that social rapport, and once I've got it, I can snap away to my heart's content while carrying on a bit of light-hearted patter.

Master that skill with a phone camera, and you're ready to move onto the bigger task of making someone at ease being photographed with a full-frame monster. ✪

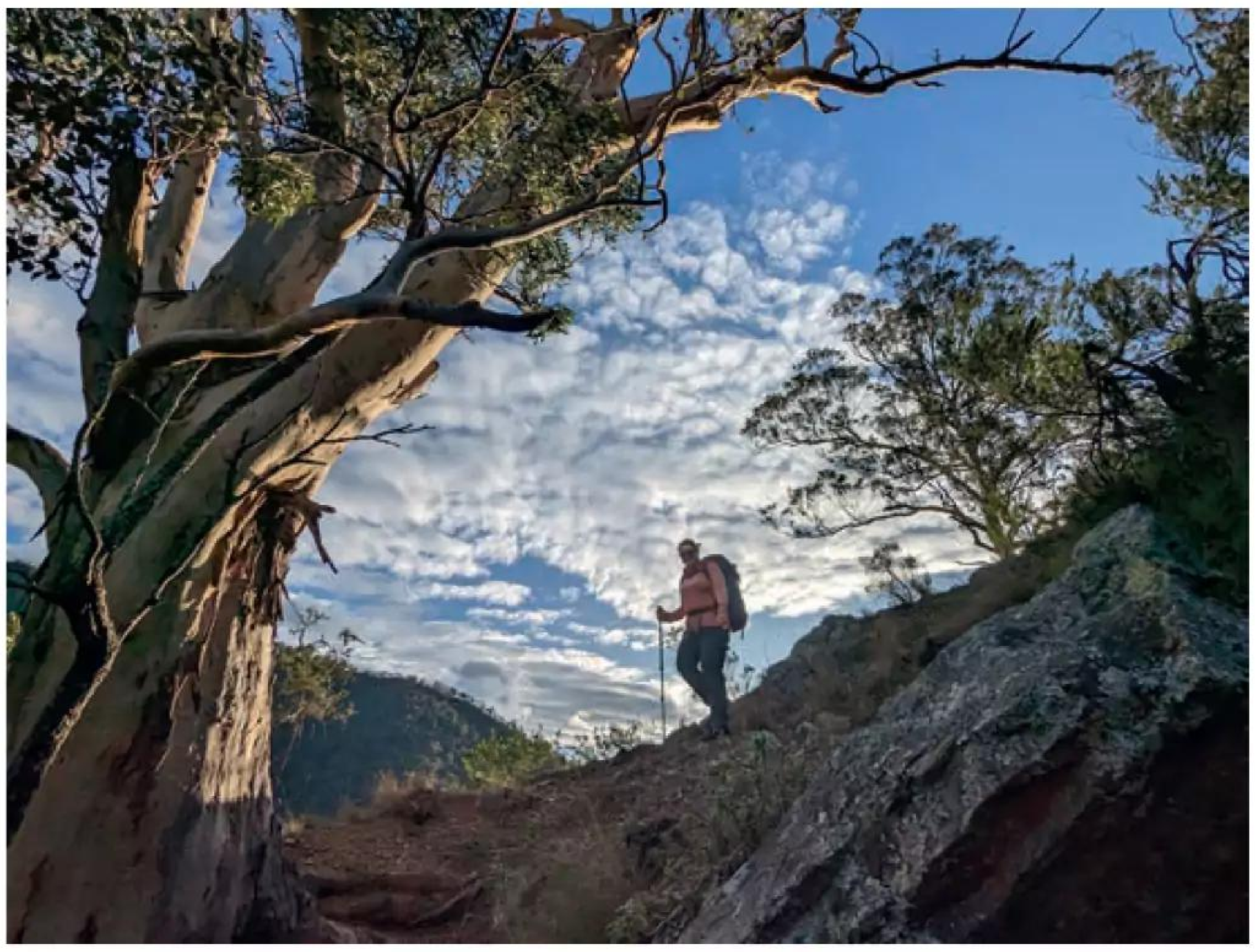




THIS PAGE,
TOP TO BOTTOM:
I immediately noticed the leading lines of the tracks and roof supports at Sydney's Redfern station; my phone was already in my hand;

I started looking for a frame for NZ's Wakatipu as soon as I saw it. An old tyre used as a bumper on the pier was perfect;

On a hike I carefully built up the elements around the hiker in the frame, using trees, rocks and ridgelines.



HOW CLOSE CAN YOU GET?

BY DOUG GIMESY

Thanks to bigger megapixel sensors and cropping in post, the humble teleconverter probably doesn't get as much of a look in as it used to. But should this still be the case? In this feature, we look at the pros and cons of teleconverters.

Whilst I could have easily cropped in to get the same composition of this pink-eared duck, given the good light conditions and still subject, I was able to still shoot at a low ISO. In turn, this gave me more pixels and hence greater detail for the final capture. Sony A1, FE 600mm F4 GM OSS + 1.4X Teleconverter. 1/640s @ f5.6, ISO 100. -1.7ev.

When a photographer wants to fill more of the frame with a subject, they normally have four choices; move themselves closer, reach for a telephoto lens, add a teleconverter, or crop in – either in post-production or using the camera's crop mode.

However, moving closer isn't always an option, and bigger telephotos lenses can be both expensive and heavy to carry. So, should you consider just adding a teleconverter to what you have, or just crop in later?

TALKING TELES

With today's higher megapixel cameras, there are many times we can fill the frame by simply relying on the ability to crop in post.

At the same time, for those who don't have a high megapixel camera (think 30MP+), thanks to programs like Topaz AI or Lightroom's Super resolution, the potential for upscaling and then cropping offers pretty good results.

So, if cropping later can be such a good option, why even consider using a teleconverter at all? Let's take a look.

THE POSITIVES

Using a teleconverter has a few benefits; both for how you plan to use the end image and for your creative choices.

The first is that a tele gives you a sharper image and more pixels straight out of the camera to print or crop from.

So, if you need the pixels, for say printing large for example, or the amount of cropping required is so great it impacts image quality, this is where teleconverters shine.

The other advantage to a teleconverter is a creative one in that it can give you a shallower depth of field at the same aperture. Let's say you had a 400mm set at f/5.6. If you had a 200mm f/2.8 and added a 2x teleconverter, you'd get the same 400mm f/5.6 and with the compositional option of a shallower DOF/increase bokeh, versus cropping in on the 200mm.

The other advantage of course is that a teleconverter is typically small and can easily fit in a camera bag or pocket. They're also much cheaper than upgrading to a new lens.

LEFT: Teleconverters are just not for big prime lenses. They can be great to give just a little more reach for your zoom lenses as well. I'll often use a 1.4x on a 70mm-200mm or 100-400mm to give me a 98-320mm or 140-560mm, like in this shot of a white-faced heron. Sony A1, FE 100-400mm F4.5-5.6 GM OSS + 1.4X Teleconverter @ 560mm. 1/1600s @ f10, ISO 500.

BELOW: As this black flying fox was still, I could slow down the shutter speed and get a low ISO. I knew the tight composition I wanted, so it made sense to get maximum pixels and detail of this magnificent animal. In this case, a tele was ideal to help realise the shot. Sony A1, FE 600mm F4 GM OSS + 1.4X Teleconverter. 1/800s @ f5.6, ISO 4000.

THE NEGATIVES

With all of that, why wouldn't you always choose to use a teleconverter than carry a potentially bigger and heavier lens? Well, there are a few negatives, and these relate to the conditions you are shooting in and the subject you are photographing.

To me however, the greatest downside of a teleconverter is that you lose light to your sensor.

Depending on which type of teleconverter you are using, it will be one f-stop for a 1.4x and two f-stops for a 2.0x. It's just the way f stops work. Basically, the f-stop number is the ratio of the focal length of the lens to the physical maximum diameter of that lens' iris diaphragm (aperture), both in millimetres.

So, with a 200mm lens with a maximum aperture of 71mm, you would have a f/2.8 (i.e. 200/71) lens. Add a 2x teleconverter and the focal length increases to 400mm (which is what we want), but the physical diameter of the iris diaphragm doesn't change. At 400mm, you now have a lens that's 400mm/71mm, or an f-stop of /5.6. That's just physics!

WHAT'S A TELECONVERTER?

A teleconverter (also sometimes called an 'extender'), is a lens that fits between the camera body and a compatible primary lens increasing the primary lens' focal length. Or to put it another way, it's a magnifying glass that crops out the edge of a scene giving a narrower field of view and in doing so making the central area larger.

How much magnification they give depends upon the teleconverter, but most commonly you'll find them as 1.4x or 2.0x.

So if you put a 1.4x on a 300mm f/4 lens for example, it will become a 420mm f/5.6 lens. If you put a 2x on a 70-200 f/2.8 it would become a 140mm-400mm f/5.6.

Also notice here how the f-stop has changed? A 1.4x teleconverter will add one stop to the lens, with a 2x adding two stops.

Canon
EXTENDER EF 2× III
2×
Canon
EXTENDER EF 1.4× III
1.4×

CROPPING IN-CAMERA VS IN POST

For some reason, many people think that cropping in-camera is like adding a magical zoom capability to the system. I've even heard people say "I use a crop sensor to get closer". The thing is, cropping in camera or using a cropped sensor just makes the image look like your lens has magical zoom capabilities because you are just seeing less of the scene. The end result is exactly the same as if you had cropped-in in post.

There is however a downside to this approach; you have thrown away parts of the scene and pixels that you might have been able to creatively include later. If there was one upside to cropping in camera, it's only that you get smaller file sizes (and from this potentially faster shutter burst speeds and duration), but I think that's a very small upside!

> "A TELE GIVES...MORE PIXELS STRAIGHT OUT OF THE CAMERA TO PRINT OR CROP FROM..."

Wanting to ensure I didn't disturb this gannet feeding, keeping a good distance was paramount. So, with good light allowing a low ISO, and a relatively still subject making framing easy, I chose to use a teleconverter to 'get close'. Having decided this, the next key consideration was how to attach it without exposing my sensor to salty sea mist! Sony A1, FE 400mm F2.8 GM OSS + 1.4X Teleconverter. 1/2500s @ f4.5, ISO 400. +0.3ev.

To this, as you are also adding another piece of glass, regardless of the f-stop, you will also lose some of the light transmission (which is called a T-stop, 'T' for transmission). For teleconverters, this normally equates to about a quarter to half of a stop, so using one means that when you take an image (with the lens at its widest aperture), all else being equal, your ISO will need to be between 50% to 100% higher.

If you have lots of light and are already shooting at a low ISO, let's say between 100-400, or your image is comprised of lots of midtones, whites and highlights, this likely won't be an issue as you won't notice the increased sensor noise.

But if you are already working in higher ISOs, say in the thousands, or you are taking images with lots of blacks and shadows (where noise really shows up), then doubling your ISO could become a problem.

One other image quality impact is that by adding an extra piece of glass, image quality can soften. With great teleconverters, especially 1.4x, I haven't noticed a huge impact, but it is there.

Also, whilst not an image quality impact, something else to consider is that by adding a teleconverter, it may reduce a camera's focus speed. This isn't normally an issue when using expensive low f-stop prime lenses, but with other lenses (especially non-native glass) it's worth considering.

Finally, as with any lens change, adding a teleconverter takes time, and depending on what you are trying to capture, the time you need to remove your lens, add the teleconverter, then add your lens back onto the teleconverter, steals time you could be shooting. Doing this in the field also means you are exposing the camera body to the risk of sensor dust. This probably isn't a dealbreaker of course, but it's worth considering for locations where getting a sensor clean is not easy – i.e. day one of your three-week trip to Antarctica!

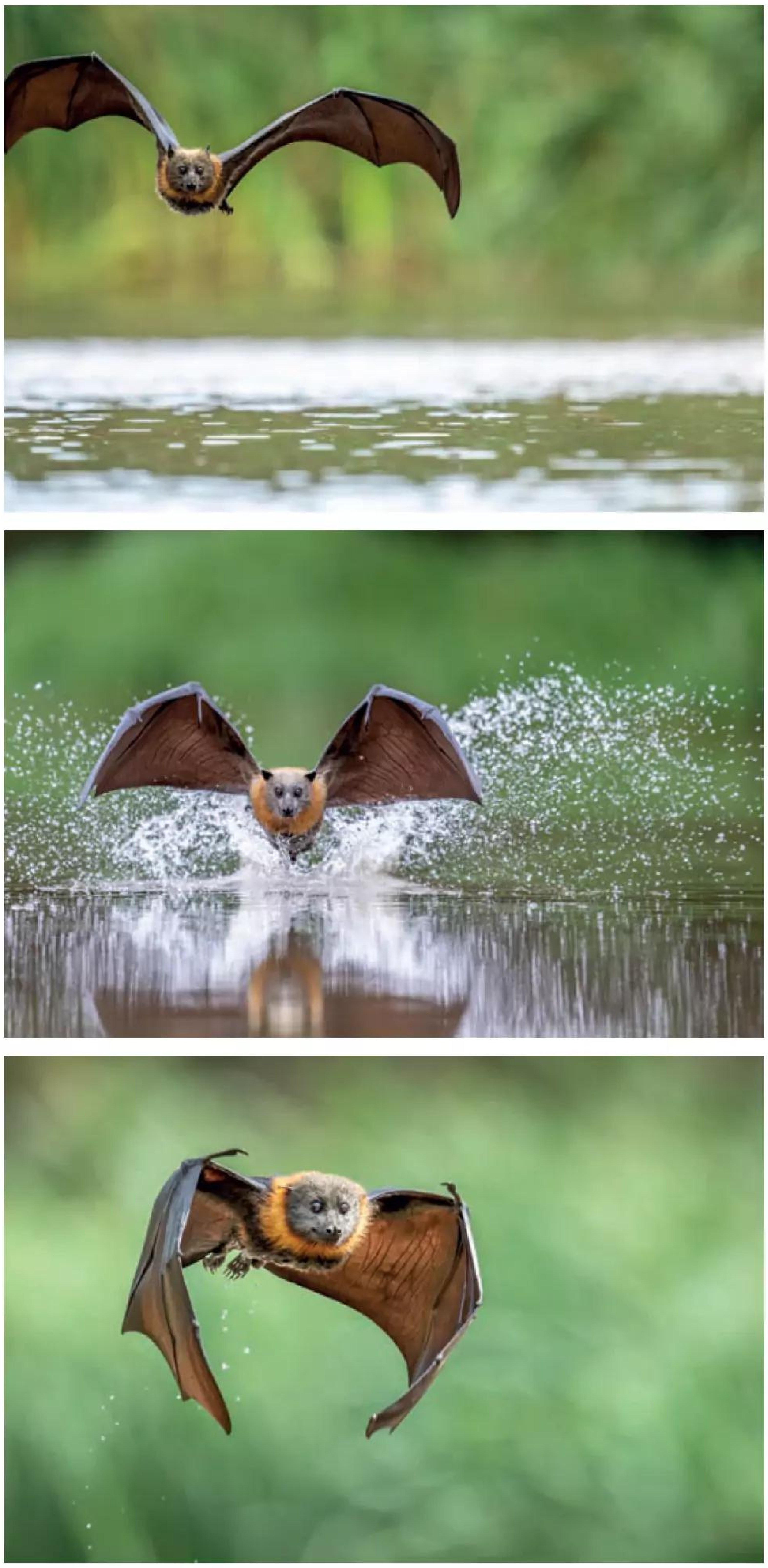
SO, WHAT'S THE BEST OPTION?

Teleconverters are a great invention that allow photographers to shoot with a longer focal length and fill more of the frame, without having to buy or carry a longer lens.

They are also a relatively cheap investment, and they can usually be used on multiple lenses. But at the same time, the ease with which we can crop in post has never been better.

As a professional, if I need to fill more of the frame, can't move, don't have a bigger lens and ISO is not an issue, I will usually reach for one. It often gives me a slightly higher quality image with more pixels, and that's important in my work.

But for the many photographers where lots of pixels aren't important, and excluding the creative considerations a teleconverter may bring, I think the downsides of potential higher ISO noise, reduced focus speeds and other negatives mean you're probably better to just focus on getting the shot at the time and cropping in later. ✪



ABOVE: For action shots if using a fixed focal length lens, sometimes a teleconverter can be a disadvantage, as the subject can easily move out of frame, or suddenly get too close, and there is nothing you can do. This was the case in the first image using a 600mm with a 1.4 tele (i.e. 840mm); I just couldn't centre it quickly enough. For the second image, the flying fox wasn't moving as quickly, and I got lucky. But after that I decided to remove the tele and give more space to get it somewhere in the frame. Doing this also dropped my ISO and technically helped speed up my autofocus. The result was the third image, which I like, but also still had enough clean pixels to produce a large file crop.

The Kansas City Chiefs get ready to run a play on the 49ers goal line.

THE PLUCKY UNDERDOG

BY RAY DOHERTY

For many sports photographers, the NFL is widely considered the most competitive sporting competition of them all, and to capture a game is a dream few will ever realise. And yet remarkably, one diminutive Brisbane photographer has made her name as a pitchside shooter at some of the biggest pro football games in the US and UK. From capturing amateur games with a point-and-shoot to the pinnacle of US sport, this is Nikki Verbakel's story.

AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHY: YOUR JOURNEY IN PHOTOGRAPHY IS PRETTY INCREDIBLE. HOW DOES ONE GO FROM AMATEUR GAMES IN AUSTRALIA TO THE NFL?

Nikki Verbakel: It all started 13 years ago in Melbourne, when my husband, Aaron, started playing American Football again with the Pakenham Silverbacks and I wanted to take photos of him playing. I started with a little Canon PowerShot, something cheap back then, and began learning.

I started taking photos of other senior teams, juniors, and women's, and I became friends with another photographer, Barend Van Den Hoek, who is the current photographer for Gridiron Victoria. I began following him around, shadowing him and learning as much as I could over the next couple of years, whilst upgrading my equipment. I even started playing myself for Melbourne University women's team.

Later, we moved to Queensland where Aaron started playing for the Moreton Bay Raptors and once again, I started taking photos of the team. I noticed there weren't many photographers covering the games in Queensland, and I quickly built a strong following, where, over the next few years I started doing the State team photos at National Tournaments, Sun Bowls and everything else, travelling at my own cost across the country to shoot for Gridiron Queensland.

In 2019, I signed with a media company that said they could get me accreditation to shoot NFL games in New York, however when I got there, it turned out they couldn't get me the needed accreditations, so I made a few calls to some local high schools and colleges and got to shoot for Wagner College V Penn State on Statton Island and Union High School in New Jersey.

AP: HOW DID YOU GET TO SHOOT THE NFL?

NV: In January 2023, the NFL was running a competition for a trip to the Superbowl for an Australian and a New Zealand fan. My husband Aaron nominated me, and I won the Australian prize!

It was so exciting, and a dream come true to go to the Superbowl. It was here I made connections with the NFL, and in particular, Charlotte Offord, GM of the NFL Asia/Pacific.

In October 2023, Aaron and I decided to go to the UK for a holiday to see some of his family, and I contacted Charlotte and asked what the chances of shooting at some of the games would be while I was there.

Charlotte, who was invaluable and aware of the work I had done, arranged for me to shoot two games, the first being the Buffalo Bills V The Jacksonville Jaguars and then two weeks later, the Baltimore Ravens V the Tennessee Titans.

Previously, I had already reached out to the San Francisco 49ers, who, after checking my credentials with Charlotte, were happy to have me come and shoot a game the following month, however when I got home, I contracted Covid and lost my hearing for two months, so that trip had to be postponed until 2024.

WISHNOWSKY
3
ARAIZA
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ABOVE, TOP: Looking slick as always, Kansas City Chiefs star quarterback Patrick Mahomes arrives for the game. Canon R3, Sigma 120-300mm lens @ 205mm. 1/2000s @ f4.5, ISO 800.

ABOVE, BOTTOM: 49ers Punter, Australia's Mitch Wishnowsky stands next to his Chiefs counterpart Matt Araiza in pre-game warm ups. Canon R3, Sigma 120-300mm lens @ 300mm. 1/2000s @ f4, ISO 100.

MIDDLE: The San Francisco 49ers run out for the must-win match, led out by number 64, centre, Jake Brendel. Canon R3, Sigma 120-300mm lens @ 120mm. 1/2000s @ f4, ISO 320.

RIGHT, TOP: Both 49ers and Chiefs players come together for a post-match prayer led by 49ers QB Brock Purdy. Canon R6, EF24-70mm f/2.8L USM lens @ 24mm. 1/1000s @ f2.8, ISO 800.

RIGHT, BOTTOM: San Francisco 49ers Quarterback Brock Purdy in warm up mode. Canon R3, Sigma 120-300mm lens @ 300mm. 1/2000s @ f4.5, ISO 200.

AP: YOU HAVE NOW WORKED WITH THE NFL FOR A COUPLE OF YEARS. WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES IN WORKING AT LARGE-SCALE EVENTS LIKE THIS?

NV: In London, aside from a select few photographers, everyone else must shoot from behind the barrier on the sideline, which can be difficult, as you have a whole team, including coaches and support staff on the sidelines.

No one is allowed to shoot from behind the goal posts, or endzone. So, you need to be constantly following play and get the shots when you can – it's not easy. However, in San Francisco, due to the size of the stadium, I could pretty much go anywhere I wanted to.

Shooting in San Francisco was different. I was contacted by the 49ers Head of Photography, Terrell Lloyd, and we had a Zoom call where he wanted to know more about me, what I had done and what I wanted to achieve in my time there.

I was nervous prior to the call, and I didn't know how I would be received. There were also the issues around having to learn the team's protocols and procedures for game day.

But once I arrived, I was welcomed by everyone, from Terrell to other photographers. The media outlets, the players, administration staff, coaches, and ev-

THE MVP OF DAILY THRILLS
ARAIZA
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eryone treated me so wonderfully and welcomed me so much that I felt like the Niners were one big family.

AP: WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR IN A SPORTS PHOTOGRAPH?
NV: I look for a few things. Obviously in sports there's the action and drama, which you're trying to capture, but I also try to focus on the emotion of the players during the play. For me, the emotion in someone's face can tell a story as well.

AP: TELL US ABOUT YOUR WORKFLOW, FROM SHOOTING, EDITING AND GETTING THE WORK OUT THERE, WHAT'S YOUR PROCESS?
NV: As I am an independent shooter, my process is different from the photographers that work for media organisations. My task is simple, I take the photos, edit post-game, and distribute the photos to where I need them to go, such as on social media.

However, media photographers do it differently, they shoot, edit and transmit on the go. Some send them to their phones that sends them straight out or at half time, or they go to the media room, where they edit and send images back to their newspapers, magazines or socials – it's instant.

I even noticed at some stadiums there are ports on the sideline where photographers can connect their laptops and send their photos off immediately. It's impressive, but at this stage my process is much simpler than their needs.

AP: CAN YOU SHARE WITH US YOUR SET UP? WHAT DO YOU SHOOT ON?
NV: I use a Canon R6 and a Sigma 120-300mm f/2.8 lens with a 1.4 teleconverter, as well as a 24-70mm Canon f/2.8 lens.

When I was in San Francisco, I borrowed a Canon R3 from photographer Jim Walker who also taught me a lot, as I found I needed more versatility. An R3 of my own is on the shopping list – one day!

AP: OF YOUR NFL EXPERIENCE THUS FAR, WHAT IS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE PHOTOGRAPH?
NV: I've taken a few photos that I like, however what I really like to capture is the players pre-game, during warm up and especially when the anthems are played. You can really see the emotion on their faces and what it means to them to be there playing in the NFL.

“THERE’S A FAMOUS PHOTO BY AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHER CAMERON SPENCER OF USAIN BOLT COMPETING IN A RACE AND HE LOOKS OVER TO HIS COMPETITOR WHILE SMILING. I WOULD LOVE TO TAKE A SHOT LIKE THAT ONE DAY!”

There's a famous photo by Australian photographer Cameron Spencer of Usain Bolt competing in a race and he looks over to his competitor while smiling. I would love to take a shot like that one day!

AP: YOU HAVE ALREADY DONE WHAT MANY WOULD DREAM OF IN REACHING THE NFL, SO WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU IN ADVANCING YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY CAREER?

NV: I would like to able to do more NFL photography in the future, but it's hard living in Australia. Trying to gain more experience and opportunities in Australian pro sport is one my prime goals for now.

AP: WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR THOSE WANTING TO BREAK INTO SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY?

NV: Everything I have done so far; I have done off my own back. From my equipment to my travel, it's cost me a great deal of time and money to pursue my passion and my dream.

I don't have sponsors or sponsorships, but I do have generous followers that support my GoFundMe campaigns, which helps a little with travel costs.

I think a new photographer must be prepared for the reality that you are going to need to spend money, even while you are still learning.

I also didn't wait for things to come to me. I went out there, took chances and backed myself with the support of my husband. It's a long, hard road that I am still on, and young people must be prepared for that when considering a career in photography, not to be blinded by the lights of these epic events and understand there is a mountain of hard work to go through. In the end, you still may not get there.

I have had some great opportunities that have given me unforgettable experiences, but at the same time my husband and I have worked our backsides off with full-time jobs, weekend jobs and not to mention all the field work, photographing games, editing and travelling, and all at my own cost.

But I love it, it's my passion. You've just got to be prepared to do the hard yards, build a network of contacts and find some mentors if you can.

AP: WHAT WOULD BE YOUR DREAM SPORTING EVENT TO SHOOT, YOUR HOLY GRAIL?

NV: Easy, a Superbowl! But I also love AFL as well, so an AFL Grand Final would be another great event, maybe even a State of Origin, but I have a long way to go before I get there. I'm still learning, developing and growing as a photographer.

That said, the Olympics is coming to Brisbane in 2032, so who knows what could happen by then. Ultimately, I would love the opportunity to work for a professional sporting team. Growing up in Melbourne I was an obsessive Collingwood fan, so one day, maybe, working for them would be unreal. ✪

To see more of Nikki's work, check out Touchdown Photography on Instagram @touchdown_photography.

ABOVE, TOP: Nikki photographs Niners linebacker Jalen Graham in warm up.

ABOVE, BOTTOM: Nikki with the San Francisco 49ers head of photography, Terrell Lloyd.

OPPOSITE, TOP TO BOTTOM:
49ers Rookie Wide Receiver Ricky Pearsall during the national anthem. It was his first game back after being shot in a robbery only two months prior. Canon R6, EF24-70mm f/2.8L USM lens @ 70mm. 1/640s @ f2.8, ISO 100.

Niners all-star tight end George Kittle gets a sideline high from his wife, Claire Kittle. Canon R3, Sigma 120-300mm lens @ 256mm. 1/2000s @ f4, ISO 800.

Forty Niners running back Jordan Mason breaks through the line. Canon R3, Sigma 120-300mm lens @ 300mm. 1/1250s @ f5, ISO 125.

JOIN THE CLUB

BY DR DON MUNRO

Many successful photographers around the world are members of their local camera clubs. But what do clubs do, and how can you make the most of yours?

One of the secrets of many successful photographers is that they are active members of their local photography club.

Professional photographers join clubs to escape from the stress of running their businesses so they can work on their passion projects. Semi-professionals use clubs to practice their skills in a supportive environment. Hobbyists join to develop their creativity with like-minded artists. And beginners join clubs to learn from others in ways that are impossible with internet-based courses.

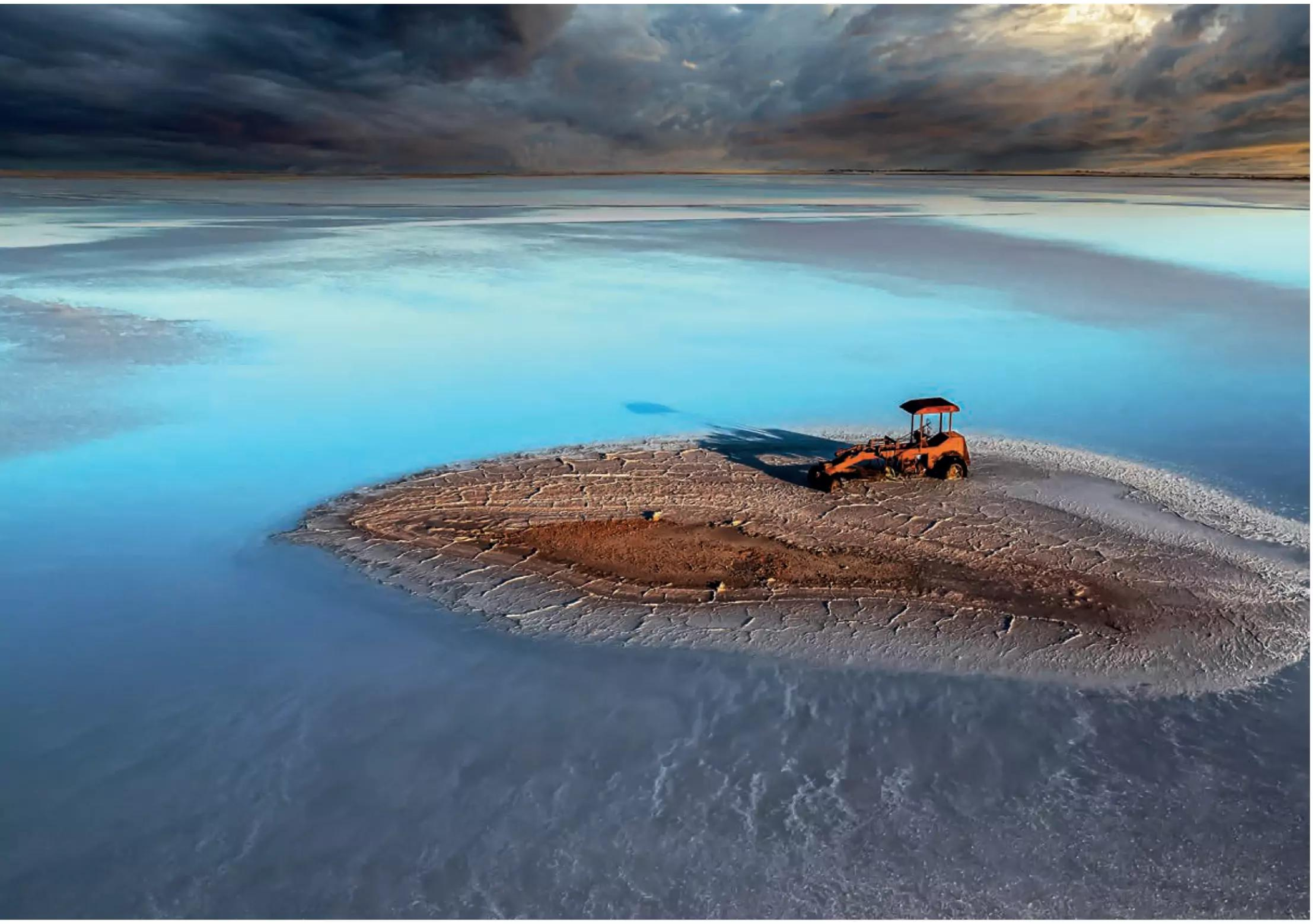
But what do camera clubs actually do and how can you make the most of your local club?

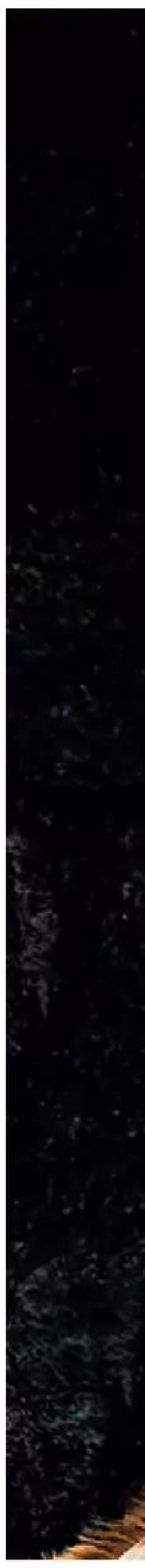
SO, WHO GOES TO CLUBS?

You can find camera clubs (also called photography clubs) on every continent on the planet. There are over 600 clubs in the USA, 500 in the UK, and clubs are very strong across Europe and Asia. In Australia in 2023 there were more than 270 clubs with around 9,500 active members, compared with the 14,500 paid photographers in Australia. Australia's clubs are based throughout rural and city regions.

People from all walks of life join camera clubs. You can often find current or retired professional photographers, industry representatives, fine art practitioners, academics, art teachers and students. But in most clubs, the majority of its members are men and women who are current or retired nurses, engineers, concrete pourers, carpenters, farmers, public servants and others – a diversity of people with a common passion for photography.

Captured by Mosman Camera Club member Robin Moon, her image *Penguin Portal* was taken from a zodiac at water level in the Lemaire Channel in Antarctica in 2022. "Whilst slow cruising through an iceberg 'graveyard' I was immediately attracted to the shape and texture of the hole, the sharp icicles and the patterned ice behind," she says. "I knew instantly all that created the basis for a strong image. Initially the scene was empty and after asking my zodiac driver to swing back around to ensure I had not missed the best possible composition, the little Adelie appeared. In post processing I moved him to a more prominent place, hence creating a composite. The Adelie peering at the water whilst the jagged icicles melted above him ,became a metaphor for his fragile existence in a pristine wilderness slowly affected by climate change." Sony A1, FE 100-400mm F4.5-5.6 GM OSS lens @ 400mm. 1/2500s @ f6.3, ISO 500.





LEFT TO RIGHT:
Captured by Hornsby Heights and Pennant Hills member Jonathan Holliday, his image *Abandoned Grader* was his first opportunity to capture an aerial shot of the old grader at Lake Tyrell, Victoria, using a drone. Post processing included a first attempt at a sky replacement (with a separate sky shot from the same location) to provide the dramatic scene. DJI Air 2S, 22mm f/2.8 lens. 1/1600 sec @ f2.8, ISO 100, -0.7 ev.

Two Giraffes by Pennant Hills Club member Don Dickins. "Our club had organised a special outing to photograph Taronga Zoo, and I was keen to photograph a giraffe where its eyes could be seen. Often in bright light, the eyes just appear as black spots. I was fortunate enough to get two giraffes together with their eyes lit. With some processing I was able to fade the background so that the subjects were better defined." Canon 5D Mark III, 150-500mm lens @ 370mm. 1/1250s @ f9, ISO 1250.

Captured by Mosman Camera Club member Timothy Moon, his image *The Podium* was runner-up in Commercial Category of the Australian Photographic Prize 2023. The right hand side of the image has been mirrored to remove buildings in the back of frame on the left, with a colourful sky blended in to match the overall colour palette of the image. Nikon D85, Laowa 12mm lens. 1/200s @ f9, ISO 400.

Clubs range in size from around 10 members to clubs with hundreds of active members. While most clubs support all types of photography, there are also specialist clubs. Some focus on creative photography only. Others are digital only, with no face-to-face meetings. In NSW there are also specialist Mandarin and Cantonese speaking camera clubs.

As with many community organisations around Australia, the median age of club members is in the 50+ range. This can be daunting to younger photographers at first, but older members have a wealth of knowledge to share and are very encouraging of young photographers.

WHAT CLUBS DO

Photographers have always valued getting together with their colleagues to share tips, learn new techniques, build networks and develop their creativity. The best clubs do the same – inspiring, motivating and educating people in the art and craft of photography.

The most common activity in almost all clubs is the photography competition. The club identifies a partic-

ular topic to photograph each month or so. Members shoot images based on that topic and present their best shots to the club, where a trained judge gives feedback and suggests ways the images could be improved.

This process will be familiar to all professional photographers. It is similar to being given a brief by your client that you shoot to, and then your client selects the best shots. Unlike commercial photography, however, judges score each image and, at the end of the year, the photographers with the most points are awarded trophies.

This competition process requires a rigorous approach to planning, taking, processing and presenting your photographs. It is a good discipline to embrace, even for those who are more interested in collaboration than competition. Seeing how others in your club interpreted the same topic, and hearing a judge's comments on everyone's photographs, will also improve your photography.

Given the importance of having skilled, independent feedback, the peak photography organisations in each state carry out structured training for judges. In NSW, for example, judges learn through face-to-face workshops to analyse, interpret and score photos, as well as give constructive feedback on how to strengthen the composition, technical qualities and emotional impact of the image. Similar training is provided in all the states, albeit in different ways. In Victoria, for example, judge training is provided primarily through a three-stage, online course; while in Queensland judges learn through mentors and using an extensive judging manual.

OTHER CLUB ACTIVITIES

Some clubs focus strongly on developing the creativity or photographic "voice" of their members. These clubs typically invite specialist guests to present talks, run workshops and conduct educational outings. Portfolio projects, where a small group of club members work together for six months or more to create their own photographic series, are popular. These clubs often organise exhibitions of their members' work within the club or in public venues.

All clubs encourage social and professional networking and provide a supportive social environment in what can otherwise be an isolating occupation. As well as events within the club, you may enter inter-club events and meet and learn from other clubs in the region.

Some clubs go further, and take photography into their community. Some country clubs organise the photographic exhibition for their town's annual Agricultural Show. These exhibitions encourage hundreds of people, especially young people, to take photographs, often for the first time. Another club, with a nearby children's hospital, organises an annual photographic competition for its members where the images are judged by children. The winning images are then displayed in the children's hospital, bringing joy to young patients in otherwise sterile-looking wards.

Another benefit is that Club membership can give you exclusive access to discounts and other benefits from sponsors and supporters. In addition, there are club members who have honed their skills in clubs before winning international competitions with cash prizes,

LEFT TOP: *Salt Flames* by Timothy Moon was taken over Lake Tyrrell in the Mallee District of Victoria. "The flow of groundwater into the salt lake along with the wetting and drying process lays up salts and displays the underlying iron rich red soils," he says. DJI Mavic 2 Pro @ 26mm. 1/320s @ f5, ISO 100.

LEFT BOTTOM: *Damselfly* by Don Dickins. "As I am often not able to get away from carer duties at home, I escape to the bush reserve over my back fence to indulge in some photographic therapy. Damselflies are a tiny wrinkle in the light but with a macro lens and a lot of patience we can see them up close. Often small things processed in black and white have greater visual and structural impact without the distraction of colour. Canon 5D Mark III, EF100mm f/2.8 Macro USM lens. 1/80s @ f6.3, ISO 2500.

RIGHT: *The Commute* by All Creative Central Coast president Michelle Kennedy. "I love creating images of animals behaving like people and giving them personalities that we can identify with," says Kennedy. "Each animal on the train represents someone different, and I take careful consideration to get the perspectives, shadows and colours of each element just right. There is something in every corner of my image and I hope people want to know what happens when they get off the train! The image was captured with multiple cameras and lenses, with every element photographed by Kennedy and composited in Adobe Photoshop.

being recruited by major photography brands, or exhibiting in photographic art shows.

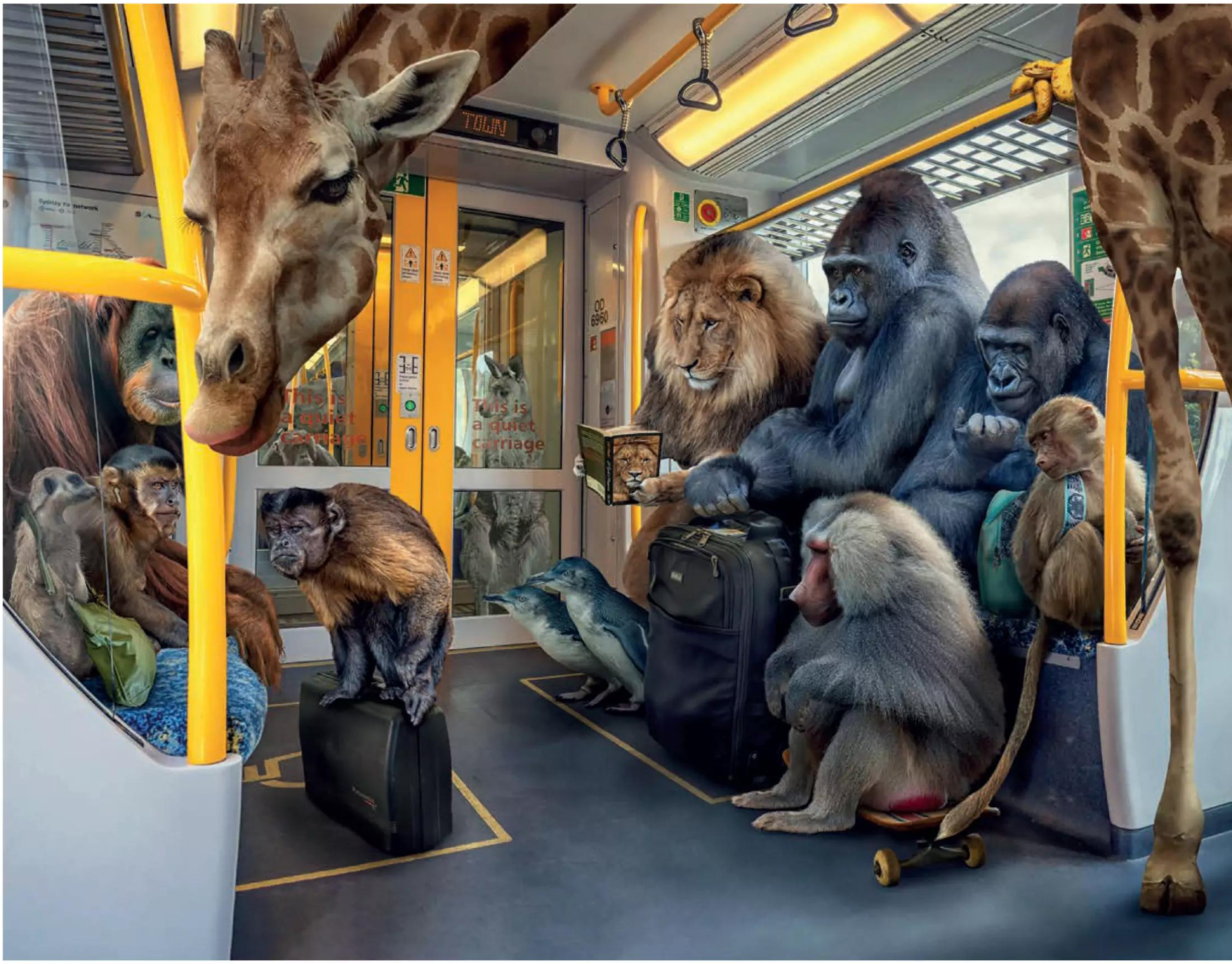
Most clubs provide a mix of all these activities. One meeting may have a photography-related speaker, and the next a photography competition. There may be outings and special learning events. Look around for a club that suits you – there are plenty to choose from.

PRO-AM PHOTOGRAPHY

Some people may be surprised at the carefully organised, professionalised approach of photography clubs. After all, aren't clubs meant to be amateur?

Photography clubs are proudly amateur in two ways. Some of the world's most famous photographers were amateurs – Alfred Stieglitz, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Jacques Henri Lartigue and Vivian Maier, to name but a few. These skilled, creative, ground-breaking photographers did not earn their living from photography – they were amateurs. Clubs continue this long tradition of welcoming all people interested in producing high quality, beautiful photographs for pleasure. The not-for-profit structure of clubs also reinforces the values of collaboration and education rather than commercialisation.

Joining a photography club also makes you part of a much greater cultural venture. Australia's camera clubs are arguably the most enduring institutions in the country involved in creating and exhibiting images of Australian people, places and events. Club members are often visual storytellers, showing scenes of Australian life to the public and recording important events, in our unique Australian daylight, and often with our distinctive Australian sense of humour. Joining a camera club means you become part of this greater visual arts movement, one that is under-funded and under-recognised it is true, but one that is important in forming and express-


TOWN
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This is a quiet carriage
OD 6950

ing Australia's cultural identity, and showing Australians images of what we value as a nation.

WHAT NEXT?

Becoming a good photographer takes practice. A camera club will give you many opportunities to practice photographing, processing, printing and presenting images. You can enter competitions, create a portfolio, and possibly see your images exhibited. Most importantly, you will be surrounded by people for whom photography is their passion. You will learn far more about photography, and far more quickly, from participating in a club.

What if there are no clubs near you, or your local club is not providing what you want? Don't despair. Contact the peak photography organisation in your state – they can advise you on how to start your own club. You will be very welcome! ✪

FIND YOUR LOCAL AUSTRALIAN CAMERA CLUB

Where	Estimated clubs and members	For more information
NSW and the ACT	80 clubs with 2,500 members	NSW Federation of Camera Clubs. fccnsw.myphotoclub.com.au/
Queensland	49 clubs with 1,900 members	Photographic Society of Queensland. www.psq.org.au/
South Australia	31 clubs with 750 members	South Australian Photographic Federation. www.sapf.org.au/
Tasmania	5 clubs with 70 members	Tasmanian Photographic Federation. www.tasphotofed.org.au/
Victoria	70 clubs with 3,500 members	Victorian Association of Photographic Societies. www.vaps.org.au/
Western Australia	32 clubs with 845 members	WA Photographic Federation. wpc.wapf.org.au

Looking back on 100 years and bold plans for the future

From printing to publishing, Yaffa Media has always been about its people and niche audiences. In 1983 it acquired *Australian Photography* from James Coleman and has been educating and inspiring photographers for over forty years. Founded in 1925 it proudly celebrates a centenary of story telling

Founded on Friendship

Vision, strength of character and an irresistible personality enabled David Yaffa to become a key player in the media industry.

Yaffa Syndicate Pty Ltd was incorporated in 1925, but it had been five years in the making for the founder David Yaffa. Born in Sydney in 1893, David Yaffa Snr was the son of immigrants from Latvia. He attended Fort Street High School and went on to be a successful salesman for an importing company. This most likely gave him some entrepreneurial ideas about what he could import and sell in Australia.

He decided to specialise in products and services for the newspaper industry, which was the dominant advertising medium at the time – radio would not launch for a few years yet, and television was decades away.

In 1920, aged 27, he went to the USA where he secured the Australian agency for the Underwood Photo Service, and on his return set up a small office in Pitt Street. More travel and more agency deals followed, with Yaffa also representing other companies from America and Britain. Soon he was selling Australian rights to not just photographs but also news articles, feature writing, fiction and comics. He imported the first American comic strip into Australia and through his services Australian readers were introduced to leading feature writers from American and British publications.

Before long Yaffa Syndicate controlled Australasian distribution of features from world-famous services in the USA, UK, South Africa and Europe, and had offices in the US, UK and New Zealand.

His obituary in *Newspaper News* stated: "Olden generations would have sensed the secret of Mr Yaffa's remarkable success in a fairy godmother's gift at birth of the Golden Magnet of Friendship. Always – in Australia and New Zealand, in Britain and the Continent, Canada and the United States – he drew friends irresistibly, and was possessed of a genius for dissolving disputes and for acting as arbitrator."

In tributes after his death in 1947 aged only 54, a common theme came through. He wore out a lot of shoe leather selling his services personally to the newspaper proprietors, and became well known for his great friendship, hospitality and negotiating skills. It was a remarkable achievement that from humble beginnings he soon became 'one of the boys' with the heavyweights of the Australian newspaper establishment. How did he do it? Through his forever friendly personality, business acumen and, according his grandson Max Yaffa, through "partying them to death".

Sir Keith Murdoch, chairman of the *Herald & Weekly Times* and father of Rupert Murdoch, issued this tribute: "For 25 years I have known Dave Yaffa as a kindly, busy, progressive man, with plenty of pluck for adventurous business. He gave these years of service to the newspaper industry and wore himself out in the process."

Another tribute came from Frank Packer of Consolidated Press: "Mr Yaffa was in all ways a man and a friend to be proud of. His ability and business acumen were recognised by all working newspaper executives of Australia, England and America. No-one had ever before occupied his unique position in Australian journalism and commanded the wide respect he did."

David Yaffa was the negotiator for many important newspaper deals, including the sale of the *Daily Telegraph* from Associated Press to the Packer-controlled Consolidated Press in 1936. He had a very close relationship with Frank Packer – he helped Packer with the launch of the *Australian Women's Weekly* in 1933.

David Yaffa Snr.

International Connections

The first products to be sold by David Yaffa under licence in Australia were photographs. His continual knocking on the doors of newspaper offices began to pay off.

Before long, newspaper pages across the country were publishing photographs with the credit line YAFFA on them. Many were what we would today call stock images, particularly photographs used in advertisements, but as radio technology improved photos for news stories were sent by cable, the early equivalent of the fax machine. They were referred to as radio pictures, radio photographs or picturegrams. And with instant transmission they were in great demand for use alongside the latest news stories.

Some newspapers were slow to adapt to the new technology and did not establish early connections with news services overseas. This left an opening for David Yaffa who on his early trips to America and Britain established links with overseas news services. Soon he was providing a news service to newspapers in Australia and New Zealand, syndicating news and feature articles as well as photographs. Syndicated news stories also carried the credit line YAFFA.

Yaffa Syndicate offices were established in New York, London and Wellington. The Yaffa Syndicate represented US firms Underwoods and

McClure's, and the UK firms Newnes, Odhams and Punch, controlling Australasian distribution of feature stories from publishing companies in the USA, UK, South Africa and Europe. Through this syndication service Australian readers were introduced to the leading feature writers of publications such as *Life, Time, Fortune, The New Yorker* and *Punch*.

Comics, too, were big business. Yaffa imported the first American comic strip into Australia, *The Clancy Kids* by Percy Crosby, and went on to syndicate a multitude of famous comic strips including *Popeye, Blondie, Mandrake, Speed Gordon, Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, Dick Tracy, Superman, Dagwood, Orphan Annie* and *Henry The Little King*. Fortunately, with some persuasion from David Yaffa no doubt, newspaper publishers everywhere recognised that the comic strip was an essential ingredient for readers who became strong followers of their favourite comic characters. Hearst-owned King Features Inc of New York was one of Yaffa's largest suppliers with comics in nearly every newspaper in Australasia.

Newspaper News

In 1928 David Yaffa launched *Newspaper News*, a monthly trade publication that enabled him to stay even closer to his newspaper friends and clients. It was only the second publication in the world of its kind (the first was in Canada, called *Marketing*). It was also great timing – newspapers reached their peak in Australia in the 1920s with 23 metropolitan dailies in print in 1926; today there are ten.

Making use of its international connections, *Newspaper News* published the latest developments in advertising, radio, newspapers and newsprint, sourced out of the cable news services in his New York and London offices. This kept Australasian newspaper, advertising and marketing executives up to date with international trends and developments in their industries.

In addition to overseas news about media and marketing, *Newspaper News* published quirky side stories such as one about a journalist who was knocked over by a bus and wrote his own obituary as he lay dying on the footpath. Talk about gutter journalism!

Locally it covered news and features about Australasian media, advertisers, advertising agencies and printing technology. Companies operating in these sectors found that not only was the content useful for their own businesses but also for their clients. It followed that if advertisers such as Colgate-Palmolive and Reckitt & Colman were reading it, then advertising agencies and the media would want to advertise in it to attract business from them. The media would also advertise in it to attract business from advertising agencies, and suppliers would advertise for business from anyone.

In the heart of the CBD

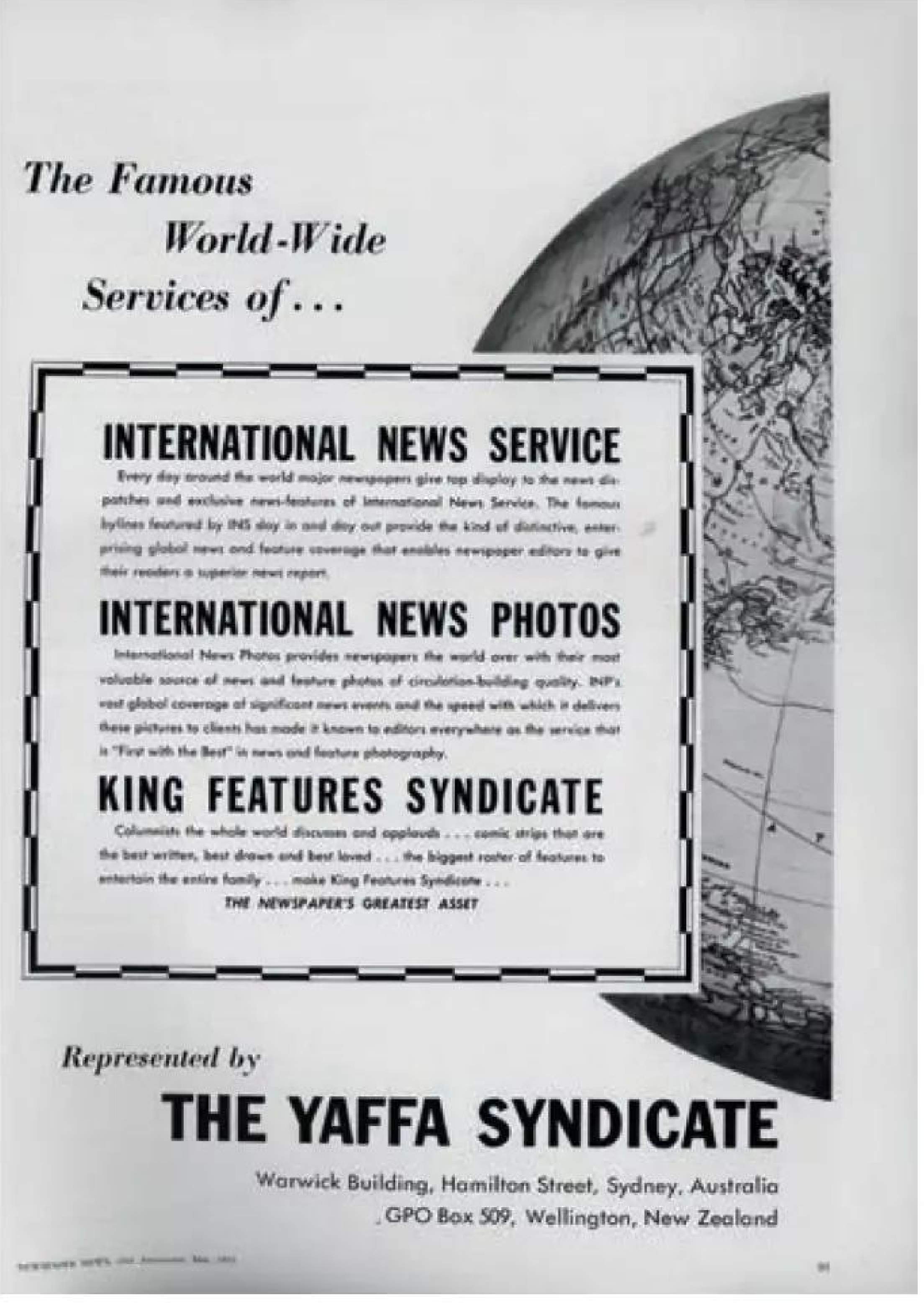
With business booming for both *Newspaper News* and the Yaffa Syndicate, larger and more appropriate premises were needed. In 1934 the company moved into new offices on the top floor of the Warwick Building at 13-17 Hamilton Street in the middle of Sydney's CBD. Also in this building were the editorial and production departments of *The Sydney Mail*, a weekly magazine published by the *Sydney Morning Herald*, while in the next door building on Hunter Street were the offices of the *Sydney Morning Herald* – talk about getting close to your clients!

David Yaffa continued his overseas travels in the 1930s to cement relationships with clients in the US and UK, but with the onset of war he had his own battles to fight. In March 1940 the Australian Journalists' Association lodged a complaint with the Federal Government about "the great harm inflicted upon Australian industry by the importation from overseas of cheap syndicated press material". The main argument was that local artists and authors were being deprived of work, and that the syndication of overseas material was "a menace to the cultural and industrial standards of Australia created by the practice by which wealthy newspaper proprietors in this country are importing syndicated copy and drawings." The government duly banned the importation of comic strips and other artwork for printing newspaper supplements that had been created overseas.

This naturally galvanised David Yaffa into action. Apart from the comic strips he was deriving good business from selling newspaper supplements. In a letter to the Minister for Customs he explained how in July 1939 he had been commissioned by Consolidated Press "to go to America to prepare and purchase ready printed colour comics. On their behalf I made a contract with the Acme Colorprint Coy and the first shipment left America three days after my arrival and landed in Sydney about the time war broke out."

He marshalled his newspaper proprietor friends to lobby the government and a flurry of letters and telegrams from the publishers followed. He wrote regularly to the Minister for Customs and other Ministers. Frank Packer wrote to the Trade and Customs Minister pointing out inconsistencies in their rulings affecting Consolidated Press. Not all newspaper publishers, however, were prepared to join the argument, saying that all their energies would be devoted to the war effort.

Despite all the lobbying the ban continued – there was a war on, after all – but it was still in place when David Yaffa died in 1947. Lobbying can be an exhausting process, perhaps it contributed to his early death.



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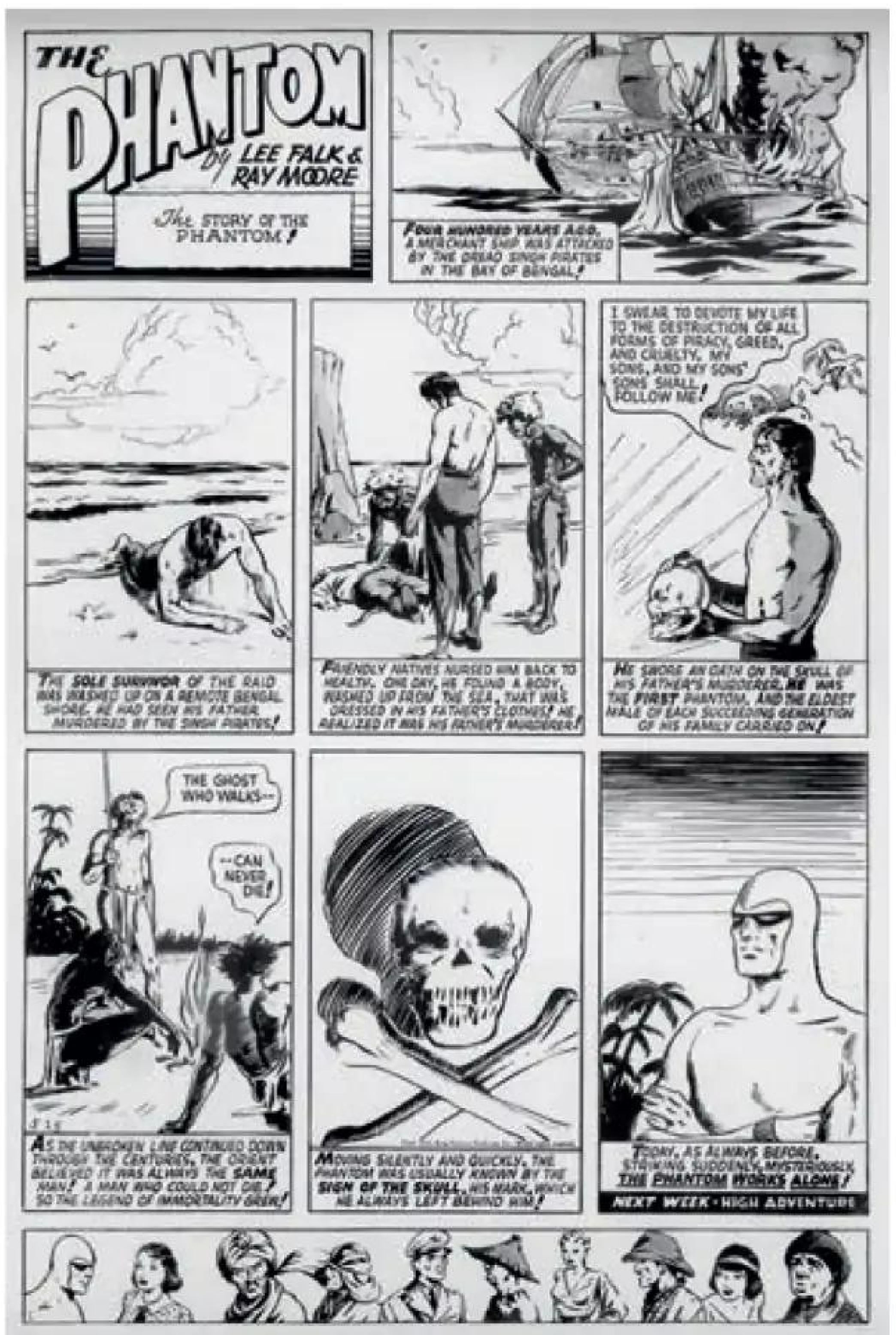
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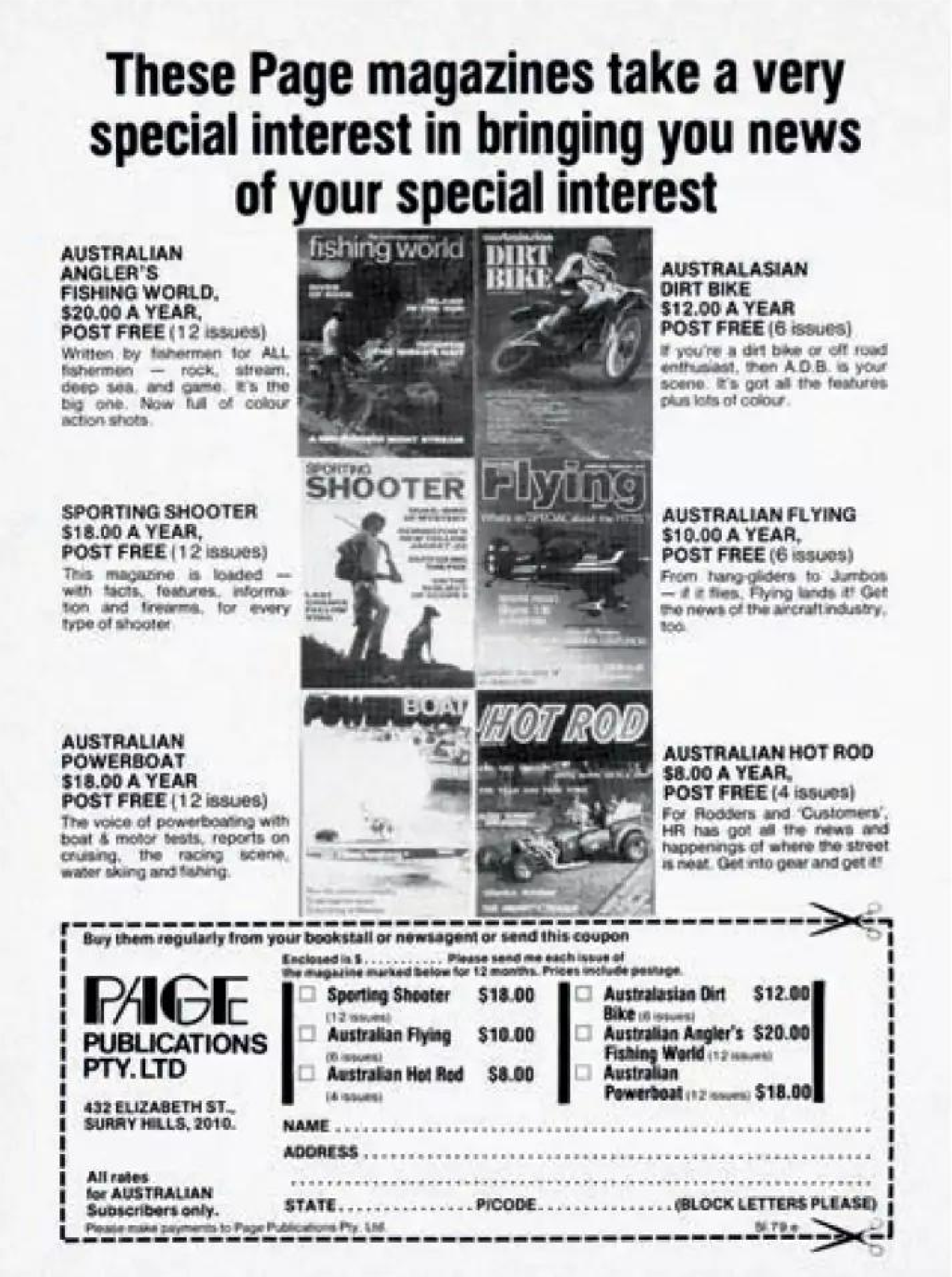
FRIENDLY NATIVES NURSED HIM BACK TO HEALTH. ONE DAY, HE FOUND A BODY, WASHED UP FROM THE SEA, THAT WAS DRESSED IN HIS FATHER'S CLOTHES! HE REALIZED IT WAS HIS FATHER'S MURDERER!
I SWEAR TO DEVOTE MY LIFE TO THE DESTRUCTION OF ALL FORMS OF PIRACY, GREED, AND CRUELTY. MY SONS, AND MY SONS' SONS SHALL FOLLOW ME!
HE SWORE AN OATH ON THE SKULL OF HIS FATHER'S MURDERER. HE WAS THE FIRST PHANTOM, AND THE ELDEST MALE OF EACH SUCCEEDING GENERATION OF HIS FAMILY CARRIED ON!
THE GHOST WHO WALKS--
--CAN NEVER DIE!
AS THE UNBROKEN LINE CONTINUED DOWN THROUGH THE CENTURIES, THE ORIENT BELIEVED IT WAS ALWAYS THE SAME MAN! A MAN WHO COULD NOT DIE! SO THE LEGEND OF IMMORTALITY GREW!
MOVING SILENTLY AND QUICKLY, THE PHANTOM WAS USUALLY KNOWN BY THE SIGN OF THE SKULL, HIS MARK, WHICH HE ALWAYS LEFT BEHIND HIM!
TODAY, AS ALWAYS BEFORE, STRIKING SUDDENLY, MYSTERIOUSLY, THE PHANTOM WORKS ALONE!
NEXT WEEK · HIGH ADVENTURE



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Left to right: newspaper article with Yaffa credit line; *Phantom* comic circa 1930s; ad from *Newspaper News*.

A Player In Print

In 1940 David Yaffa bought a newspaper press from the *Sydney Morning Herald* and converted it to four colour printing. This was the start of the company's commercial printing operations.

Prior to 1940, *Newspaper News* would have been printed by outside printers, possibly by the *Herald* on the same press purchased by Yaffa. The newly-acquired press, a newspaper rotary letterpress machine, was installed in the basement of the Warwick Building along with binding and stereotype departments, a loading dock and a crane. With an emphasis now on printing, a new company, The Rotary Colorprint Pty Ltd, was set up.

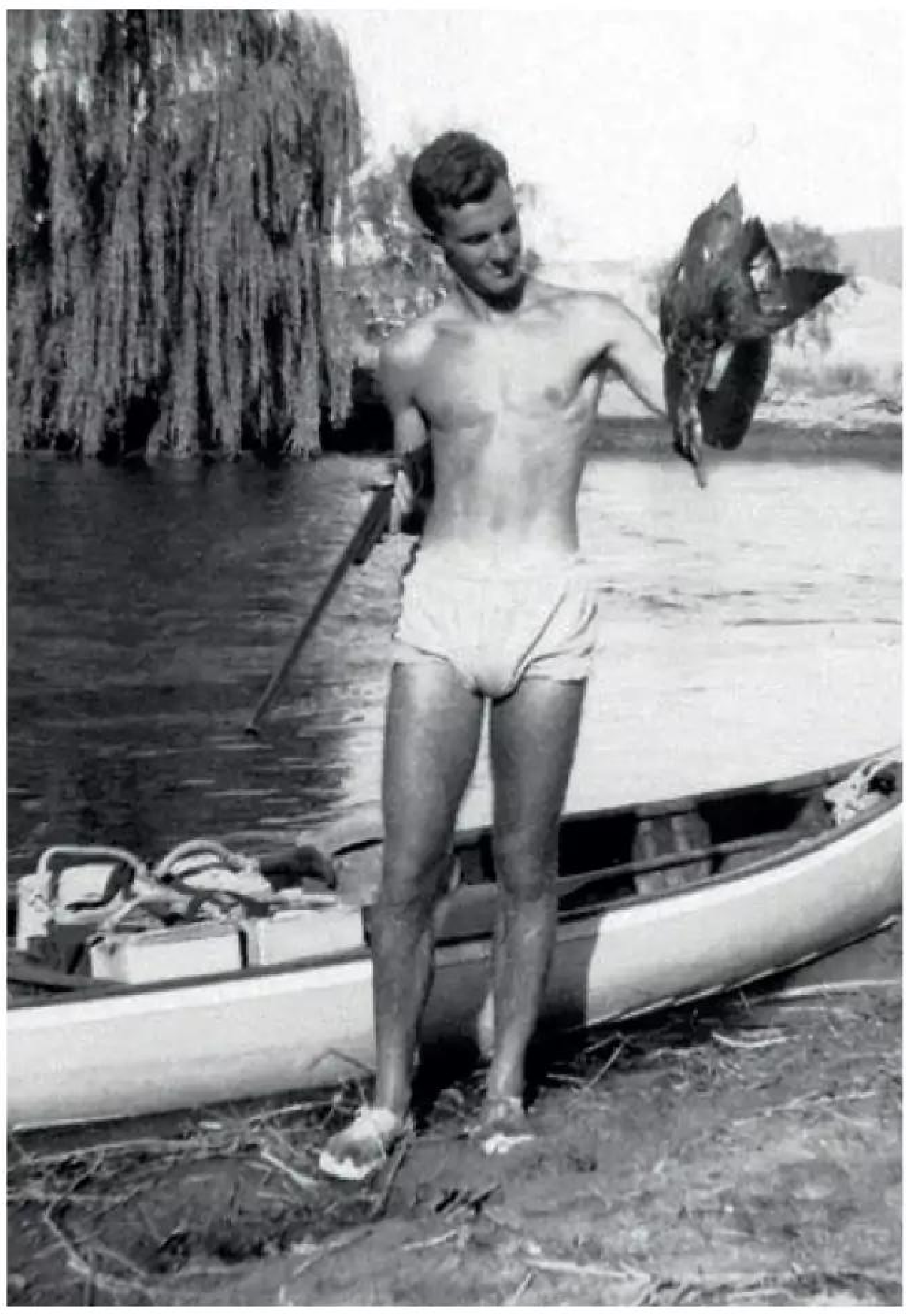
Among the first publications printed by Rotary under licence were the Pacific editions of *Reader's Digest*, *Time* magazine and the first *Phantom* comics. The *ABC Weekly* magazine and the *Australian Army* newspaper were amongst the earliest local titles printed.

To complement the newspaper printing operation a second printing facility was set up at Crane Place, a small laneway between George and Pitt Streets at Circular Quay. That building contained a number of shops and other commercial businesses, and like the Warwick Building the printing operation was in the basement. This included sheet-fed presses, later to be upgraded in 1958 to three Heidelberg Cylinder Letterpress machines, still considered to be the best letterpress press ever made, plus Heidelberg Platen and Vertical Mehile equipment. The compositors department had four linotype (hot metal typesetting) machines. Altogether there were about 30 staff at Crane Place including machinists, compositors and proof readers.

In its 65-year history there were only three managers at Rotary Colorprint. The first, Bob Ritchie, died on the job in 1966. The second, Neville Bunce Snr, held the position until 1982 when his son Neville Bunce Jnr took over.

The young Bunce started at the company as an apprentice in February 1963. "Prior to doing apprenticeships at the printers," he recalls, "all apprentices were required to do three months of office work as delivery messengers at the Yaffa Syndicate offices in the Warwick Building on Hamilton Street. The first three months of my working life were spent delivering parcels, advertising copy, metal printing blocks and newspapers all around the city, plus daily trips to Martin Place to collect the company's mail from GPO Box 606. We walked everywhere, no public transport for us. I was fifteen and a half years old and got to know all the streets and important city landmarks.

"I started my five-year apprenticeship as a letterpress printer at Crane Place in May 1963 but later that year we were told that the Warwick Building was going to be sold. A new building was to be built on the site… Sydney's Australia Square." (In all, a total of 30 buildings would be demolished for this iconic Harry Seidler-designed building that became Sydney's tallest skyscraper at 50 storeys).



David Yaffa Jnr (DY) in New Guinea.

Moving to Surry Hills

The company had been given notice to quit the Warwick Building in May 1962, but finding suitable new premises for the presses proved to be a major problem, causing extensive delays. Finally a building was found in Surry Hills near Central Station at Butt Street. (Butt Street is a dark, narrow lane that was known colloquially as Blood Alley because warring gangs of young men used to dump the bodies of their enemies there).

"The Butt Street building was three storeys, previously a cosmetics factory, large enough for both printing operations including the 55-60 printing staff and all the office staff. The newspaper press and large equipment from the basement in the Warwick Building could be accommodated on the ground floor, while the Crane Place staff and their letterpress machines could be accommodated on the first floor. The office staff were on the top floor. That was the plan," says Bunce. "not everyone was happy… Surry Hills was so far away!

"I was the first employee to walk into Butt Street – being the youngest staff member it was my job the clean up the new building. The Rotary truck driver would drop me at the door in the morning and come back in the afternoon to pick me up. I spent a few days by myself sweeping the dusty floors and doing a general clean-up.

"What I didn't know at the time was that I would be doing the same job 42 years later when the company vacated the building… sweeping the floors and cleaning up everything. I was the last person to leave the building, as well as the first to enter it!" (Young Neville is also the only person alive today to have worked at the Warwick Building, Crane Place and Butt Street).

Rotary Colorprint was a mid-size commercial printing operation from the 1960s through to the 1980s. It employed around 55 staff working 8-hour day and afternoon shifts. Over the years more than 30 apprentices did their five-year trade course there, with three apprentices achieving Apprentice of the Year status. Apprentices and truck drivers were usually sourced by Neville Bunce Snr at his local pub in Leichhardt.

In the early 1950s Rotary printed the comic sections for the weekend newspapers plus stand-alone King Features comics including *Blondie, Dagwood, Archie, Phantom Ranger, Lois, The Shadow, The Invisible Man, Flash Gordon, Beetle Bailey, Mandrake, Jungle Jim, Felix the Cat, Denis the Menace* and so on, and Cleveland Westerns. These were followed in the '60s and later by booklets of crosswords, puzzles and horoscopes and a succession of 'pulp fiction' products – detective stories, action stories, 'true confessions' and a host of titillating and risque titles such as *Daring Men's Stories, Adventure For Men, Modern Men* and *Real Experiences*. Different times – the presses had to be kept busy somehow!

By the turn of the century printing technology was marching on and plate-less printing was the way of the future. On top of this, much of the machinery at Rotary Colorprint was reaching the end of its life. Eventually there was a clear choice – upgrade most of equipment at great cost or get out of the printing business. Pragmatism won the day and the company closed operations in August 2005.

A Diversion to New Guinea

David Yaffa died in 1947 and was survived by his wife Doris, daughter Denise and son David Jnr, who was only 13. Stanley Eskell, husband of Denise Yaffa, became managing director of the company.

Stanley Eskell had been in the army during the war and had served in New Guinea, an experience he would soon put to advantage. In 1950 the company launched *The South Pacific Post*, based in Port Moresby, to be followed later by a group of other local newspapers that included *The New Guinea Courier*, *The Rabaul Times*, *The New Guinea Times* and *Nu Gini Toktok*.

In addition to printing and publishing its newspapers in New Guinea the company was busy distributing the comics that it printed in Australia as well as representing the American publications *Time* and *Life International* in the region. It also distributed *The Bulletin* and *Australian Women's Weekly* magazines and the *Daily* and *Sunday Telegraph* newspapers for Consolidated Press. Its letterhead proudly described the company as "Commercial printers and publishers of the first air-delivered newspaper in the Pacific".

David Yaffa Jnr (referred to as DY from here onwards) joined the company at the earliest opportunity aged 22 and became a director in 1959, aged 25. In 1961 Stanley Eskell resigned from the board and DY took over as managing director.

The following year discussions were held about the possible expansion of the company to include more offices and additional commercial printing operations in New Guinea. There was also comment made that the papers needed stronger editorial direction bearing in mind the changing political environment. A number of interested parties expressed their interest in purchasing a stake in the company to address such criticism. This led ultimately to the sale of a controlling interest in the New Guinea operation to the Melbourne-based *Herald & Weekly Times* Group.

Essentially Yaffa Syndicate ended its New Guinea business in 1965.

Building a Stable

For more than 30 years the company owned just one publication, *Newspaper News*. That all changed in the 1960s as David Yaffa Jnr (DY) assembled a stable of business and consumer magazines.

The company's presses were busy enough printing pulp products, but no doubt there was a limit to how many booklets of puzzles, crosswords, detective stories, true confessions and titillating tales the market could stand. Alternatively, magazines could produce a healthy income from advertising and subscriptions, particularly if they could corner a market or dominate a category.

Launching a magazine cold turkey is a lengthy and expensive process. If it fails, the financial loss can be high and irretrievable. DY's preferred method was to buy publications that were struggling or in a fire sale, and breathe life into them. By keeping a heavy lid on costs he could run them more economically than under their previous owners and, as the stable of titles grew, economies of scale could kick in.

In the 1960s he purchased eight magazines and launched none; in the 1970s he purchased eight more magazines and launched one. Right from the start the magazines were a mixture of business titles (trade magazines) and special interest titles (consumer magazines). This mix is unique – no other publishing company in Australia covers both categories, they are either publishers of business magazines or publishers of consumer magazines. This is still the case.

Three of the magazines acquired in the 1960s are still published: the business magazine *Packaging News* and the consumer magazines *Australian Flying* and *Sporting Shooter*. The one magazine launched in the 1970s, *Guns Australia*, survived in a fashion, being merged with *Sporting Shooter*. The other seven are no longer published.

Magazine publishing is an ever-changing business. Successful titles are invested in and improved. Spin-off products such as guides and directories may be created to capitalise on the momentum of the parent title and an effective subscriber list. Unsuccessful titles are quietly buried, but only after every effort has been made to keep them alive. These efforts might include changing the frequency, the paper stock, the page size, the number of pages, the binding, the print run, the distribution or the staffing.

DY was a master at tweaking these variables, but in the end it always came down to the bottom line. No room for sentiment. Of the 56 titles published by the company since 1960 only 16 survive in print. The stable reached its zenith in 2003 with 37 magazines.

Over the years with its business titles the Yaffa Group published the market leader or significant magazine in more than 20 industries including packaging, food manufacturing, advertising, shooting, photography, air conditioning, panelbeating, boating/sailing, fishing, dance, aviation, textiles/fashion, defence, sports goods, stationery, hospital management and club management. With special interest magazines it published leading titles about flying, fishing, cycling, photography, shooting, dance, sailing, walking, health, woodworking, skiing and scuba diving.

Tracy Yaffa and David Yaffa.

The Empire Builder

David Yaffa Jnr (DY)'s career with the company spanned 57 years from 1955 to 2012. As proprietor he built the company into arguably the largest independent specialist publishing group in Australia.

DY's father would not recognise the company as it is today. The syndication business, the backbone of the company before the war, no longer operates. The printing company, the major contributor to the company's coffers in the generation after the war, no longer operates. The world changed, and the company had to change with it.

During his time with the company DY presided over the expansion of its printing operations, initiated its major move into magazine publishing, assembled a stable of more than 30 magazines. He also closed down the printing company – there was no room for sentimentality.

"David Yaffa was a proprietor with a true feel for the media," stated *AdNews* in its obituary in 2018. "He was in it for the long haul. He spent a lifetime building up the business his way, through trial and error, virtually single-handed. His greatest business achievement was the development of his father's business into a significant force in Australian publishing. Few companies in Australia remain in private hands after nearly a century.

"While he was single-minded and demanding, he was not the stereotypical, ruthless media proprietor. He was polite and fair and would treat his staff with respect if they did their jobs well. For those on the editorial side it was gratifying that the content of the magazine came first. In theory a good product attracted readers, and good readership numbers attracted advertisers. More revenue could then be allocated to improving the product further. Consequently he backed his good editors and let them get on with the job without interference."

At work he remained behind the closed door of his office every day from 8.45 to 6, preferring to speak with his lieutenants by phone. There were occasional meetings in his office limited by the number of chairs for visitors (three). In later years budget meetings were held in the boardroom with senior staff of the different magazine groups, but company-wide management meetings never happened.

Most of his employees would only see him fleetingly. He was not the type of boss to wander around the building, let alone have discussions away from his office. The company Christmas party was an exception, when he was happy to chat with his staff. In some years there were rumours that he would make an announcement about the company to his staff, but that never happened either.

He retired in good health in 2012, possibly with some reluctance about handing over the company he had built to the next generation. He enjoyed six years of retirement and after his death in 2018 the company's staff were invited to join the family at the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron in Kirribilli to celebrate his life.

All four of DY's children have worked in the company at one time or another. Tracy is managing director, Max was a sales manager on business magazines for many years, Guy worked briefly in the marine group of magazines in the 1990s, and James was publisher of *AdNews* before his current role of establishing the bicycling classics events. Tracy's daughter Lucy is the company's marketing and events manager. The company is now owned by Tracy and James.

NEWSPAPER NEWS
A Prosperous New Year To All
NEWSPAPER NEWS
All media complementary
Advertising News
Auntie's big chance!
Advertising News
Patts tops $100 million
Masius, MDA & Burnett move up
"You'll find me in the Sunday Sun."
AdNews
AdNews
90 YEARS
Alexa, tell me about Amazon.

The evolution of *Newspaper News* to *Advertising News* then *AdNews*.

The Flagship

The oldest publication in the Yaffa stable is *AdNews*, the flagship of the company, which will be 100 years old in three years' time. It started life as *Newspaper News* and went through quite a few name changes.

Newspaper News launched as a monthly tabloid size newspaper in 1928, and despite its name was never just about newspapers. Advertising is the lifeblood of media, and David Yaffa recognised this right from the start. There were two publications about advertising already circulating – *Advertising in Australia* and *The Advertiser's Monthly* – that would have been seen as competitors. So he bought them out and merged them into *Newspaper News* within a year.

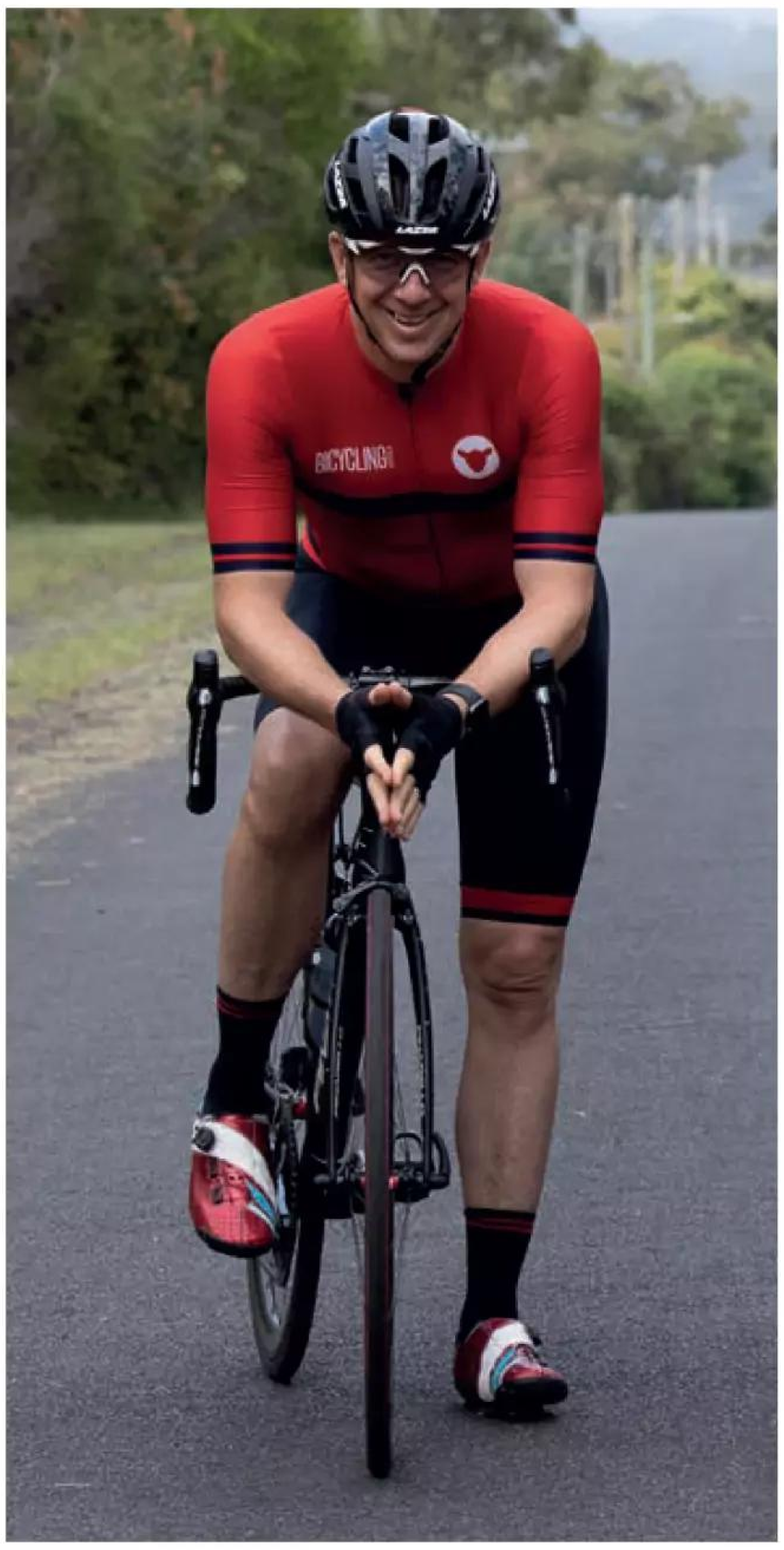
Newspaper News reported on all forms of media, not just newspapers, although newspapers were the dominant advertising medium until well after the war. Coverage concentrated more on the business side of publishing – advertising, circulation and production technology – and less on the journalism side. Commercial radio and outdoor advertising (posters and billboards) received token coverage in the early days.

Commercial radio gathered pace in the 1950s and television launched in 1956, leading to the launch of a spin-off publication called *Radio Television News* in 1957. At the same time the frequency of *Newspaper News* was increased from monthly to fortnightly and it became a magazine rather than a newspaper. *Radio Television News*, however, faced strong competition, was unable to exist on its own, and was incorporated into *Newspaper News* in 1961.

The impact of television was enormous. The production values of commercials became more and more important, leading to a rapid expansion of the advertising industry with its expertise in the creation of advertisements and media planning and buying. International ad agency networks, mostly from the US, spread across the world. Advertising agencies became indispensable players, in many ways controlling the relationship between their clients (advertisers/marketers) and the media. The appearance of specialised media buying agencies in the 1970s strengthened their position further.

This ascendance of the advertising industry led to the publication being renamed *Advertising & Newspaper News* in 1969, with a further change to *Advertising News* in 1971. This was shortened to *AdNews* in 1984 as part of a redesign.

The 1980s and the rest of the century were hectic times for the media. Until Treasurer Paul Keating stopped it, the fringe benefits tax allowed entertainment as a tax-deductable expense. Enormous amounts of alcohol and food were devoured in the interests of doing business. Long hours at the pub, lunches that never ended and exotic junkets were par for the course. For many organisations, including *AdNews*, the primary aim was to finish the week's work by lunchtime Friday so that you didn't need to go back to the office from the restaurant or pub.



Cycling Classics founder, James Yaffa in lycra.

In 1980 *AdNews* interviewed Don Morris, managing director of the ad agency Mojo, which was winning every pitch it contested at the time. "We work bloody hard here," he said on the record. "We start around 7am so that we can finish the day's work by lunchtime. That way we can enjoy lunch and not go back to the office. We do that every day of the week."

Agency Christmas parties were legendary. Certain agencies became known for their spectacular parties and made enormous efforts to ensure each one was better than the last. Mike Magnus of Magnus Nankervis & Curl owned a rural property southwest of Sydney alongside a disused railway line. Somehow he persuaded NSW Railways to open up the line and provide a train service for his guests to ride from Central Station to the end of his property's driveway where a temporary platform was constructed.

Guests at agency Christmas parties were typically staff, clients and friends in the media. For one Christmas party at MDA Sydney an above ground pool was installed in the agency and before long guests were stripping off and hopping completely naked into the pool... if they could find space... staff and guests, male and female, all piled in.

Things calmed down somewhat after the recession of 1990. Nevertheless, the advertising industry still had plenty of character – it was, after all, supposed to be the leader in creativity – but the boozy culture eased up as agencies gradually became more corporate.

Transition to Media

In 2015 the Yaffa Publishing Group was rebranded as Yaffa Media. The transition from printed magazines to a media and marketing company with multiple touch points was a complicated and at times painful journey.

The arrival of digital technology in the 1990s hit the media industry like a sledgehammer. Disruption was rampant. Print-based companies such as newspaper and magazine publishers were in many ways hamstrung by their past as they tried to hold onto their print revenues. Like most publishing companies Yaffa was a laggard in embracing the new technology, a situation that opened the door temporarily to start-ups and digital natives that had no legacy to protect. Consultants were employed to build systems and websites in the early days, often with very little success. Finally, by the end of the century, the company started to establish workable websites and newsletters and get up to speed with the changing technology.

Managing director Tracy Yaffa looked back at how it was during the transition: "When we first did digital the editor had to be across it, of course, but there was this other department that did all the uploading and other digital things, and there were even dedicated sales people just for digital. People became focused almost on keeping them separate. There was print and there was digital, whereas now it's just what it is, it's just publishing."

The rebranding of the company was announced at a staff function in 2015. "We are no longer magazine publishers," said Tracy. "We are creators of engaging media. Our inspired content is consumed on different platforms. We are experts in our diverse fields and a trusted and valued source in this new world. Our magazines are now brands across print, digital, apps, conferences and social media. We must continue to strive to achieve or maintain market leadership in each of our targeted segments."

Most importantly, the rebranding required a change of approach among the staff – they needed to embrace the future, and were advised that they could either get on board the 'Yaffa bus' or choose another bus. "It was a matter of getting wholesale change from the people," said Tracy. "They had to think differently, think about what the needs of the company were, and what the aims of the publications were. A few jumped off the bus because they simply couldn't adjust to changing needs, but by and large it was really impressive about how excited everyone got about it. It's been amazing seeing what people can turn their attention to once they get it."

One of the company's earlier diversifications was the move into events. Since the 1990s the company had been commissioning Two de Force, an events company, to organise the *AdNews* Agency of the Year Awards, an annual industry awards dinner. The relationship worked, and when Two de Force was offered for sale to Yaffa in 2007 the deal was done. Awards and other events for Yaffa magazines could then be handled in-house by Two de Force. Additionally, Two de Force could expand its operations independently by organising events for non-Yaffa clients. Events provided multiple revenue opportunities – sponsorships, entry fees for awards and competitions, and tickets to attend.

While events can be a key part of the mix, there are many other ways the company has developed to help clients achieve their marketing aims. The list now includes conferences, exhibitions, product launches, competitions, awards, podcasts, videos, roundtables, moderating and hosting. Magazines that can be extended into these areas are the ones that have survived; magazines that have not been able to offer such additional marketing opportunities are unlikely to survive. As Tracy explains: "We used to mark our success by the economies of scale – the more titles the better – although the 80/20 rule applied with 80% of the profit coming from 20% of the titles. But then the internet and social media arrived and we found the long tail of the less profitable titles was dragging us down. So our strategy became one of going deep into the industries we served – in each industry we aim to be number one, be relevant and reimagine what we can produce for them. Now there's a suite of things we can do very easily, whether it's a conference, a breakfast, an awards program, an online entry campaign or a white paper. We can do all these things and offer them up for each industry."

This has required a long list of additional skills from the editorial and production staff. The editors continue to co-ordinate content – just as they did in the old days of printed magazines – but now they need to get out of the office, be comfortable on the stage at conferences and events, create podcasts and videos, and generally be the face of the publication as well as coordinate editorial support. Now they are professional communicators, conference agenda leaders and keynote speakers, and the presence of the editor driving the content package sweetens the deal. 'Church and state', the traditional divide between editorial and advertising, is a thing of the past.

Celebrating 100 years with an eye on the future: James Yaffa, Tracy Yaffa and Lucy Yaffa.

The Next Generation

Lucy Yaffa, marketing and events manager of Yaffa Media and a fourth generation member of the family, takes a look into an unknown future.

It's near impossible to predict what impact changes in technology will have on the business – from AI to The Metaverse – innovation in technology will continue to transform how Yaffa Media's content is created, distributed and consumed.

As we look into the future, one constant at the core of our business is the people and their communities. From photography to packaging we will continue to connect with and serve the needs of each community. The nature of these connections will inevitably change as we explore new platforms and ways to connect.

Working for a medium-sized family business is quite a different experience compared to the global multinational companies I have worked for in the past. While we may not have the same access to resources as larger companies, our agility puts us in a strong position to navigate the future. We can implement changes quickly without the need for lengthy approval processes. In addition, we are open to taking risks and exploring new ideas for connecting with our communities.

I'm incredibly proud being the fourth generation in a business which has successfully adapted and evolved over the past 100 years. I'm excited about the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead for Yaffa Media.

By Jeremy Light

Jeremy worked at *AdNews* from 1978–2015.

K&F CONCEPT
NANO-B Series

K&F CONCEPT NANO B VND FILTER

Steve Thomas puts K&F's budget-friendly VND filter to the test.

Over the years I've spent a small fortune on filters, most of which have rarely seen the (bright) light of day that they're meant to tame. Yes, in my time I've tried the good, the bad, and the just plain ugly across the full spectrum of price ranges. And the latest (and one of the cheapest) is K&F filters Nano B, the most budget-friendly Variable Neutral Density filter (VND) in the Chinese company's range at around $29 for the 58mm filter I tested here.

So, how did it fare?

THE TECH

As you might expect for the price, the Nano B doesn't come with the various coatings available in K&F's higher end, albeit still very budget-friendly, filters. A 2-400 VND is rated to give between one and nine stops of light with just a few twists of the barrel.

BUILD QUALITY

The all-metal construction of the filter rings feels like it is well-made, and it's finished cleanly with a smooth but not loose twist. K&F says the glass in the filter is made from 'Professional Optical Glass', which feels similarly of high quality. The overall package is lightweight and has no apparent optical flaws.

IMAGE QUALITY

Image quality of the Nano B is surprisingly good, with no apparent colour casts, flaring or reflections, which I must admit was more than I expected. It's also an easy filter to use and seems fairly accurate through its range. In testing, I found it showed no sign of vignetting of either the traditional or the "X" factor type until you hit the Max end of the scale.

If you're new to filters, do note that this one cuts a maximum of nine stops of light, which may be enough to smooth out a waterfall for around f/16 in bright light, while in lower light this is just enough to capture light trails and for smoothing slower flowing water. It makes for a particularly versatile filter.

THE WRAP-UP

If you are looking for a low-budget, or even a throw away occasional use VND, are playing with video, or simply want to keep one with you for opportunist shots (as I do), then you cannot go wrong with the K&F Nano B. However, if you have the cash, it may still be worth looking at K&F's higher grade and various coated Nano VNDs, which are also still very affordable. ❂

RESULTS

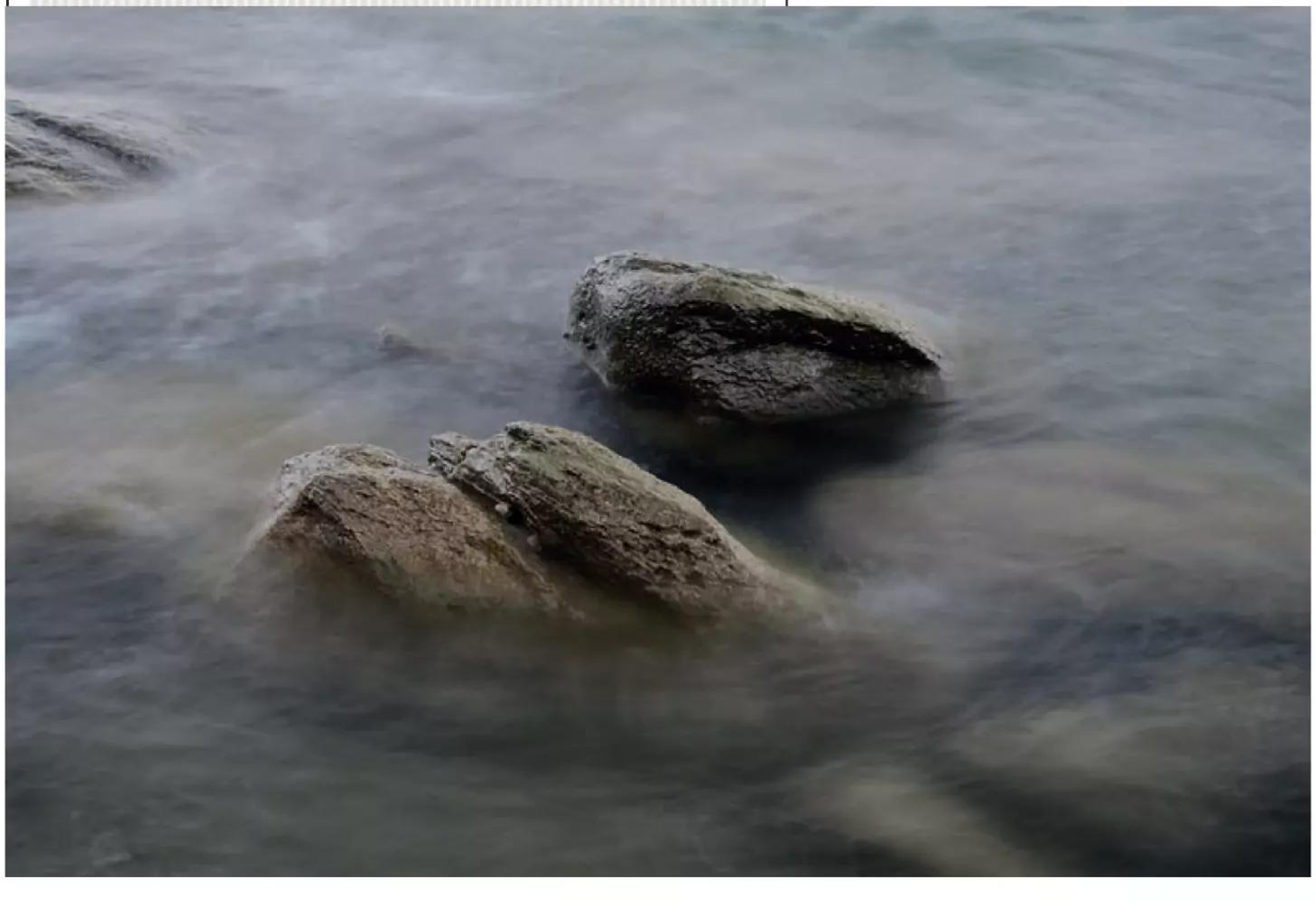
BUILD QUALITY ★ ★ ★ ★
The build quality is surprisingly good for the price, and although I can't test the long-term durability, it feels robust all-round.

FEATURES ★ ★ ★ ⯪
While a few extra coatings would be nice, especially when shooting in bad weather, at this price you cannot complain.

IMAGE QUALITY ★ ★ ★ ★ ⯪
There is no apparent colour shift or flaws optically, making these a surprisingly impressive product.

VALUE FOR MONEY
★ ★ ★ ★ ★
You get a whole lot more than you might expect at this price point, and you cannot go wrong with this filter as a low-budget option.

FINAL WORD
This filter does what it promises. There are no frills, no fancy coatings, it's a simple VND filter that performs better than expected, and without any apparent colour casts or flaws.



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DJI AIR 3S

DJI's latest compact drone is here.
Sam Edmonds takes it to the skies.

The latest addition to DJI's lineup of consumer drones, the dual-camera DJI Air 3S, is equipped with a 50MP 1-inch CMOS primary camera and a 48MP 1/1.3-inch medium telephoto camera, bringing high resolution to this tiny drone.

Sporting impressive specs including 4K/60fps HDR video, advanced obstacle sensing, and up to 45 minutes of flight time, the Air 3S offers astounding image quality as well as an array of safety features. ActiveTrack 360° and nightscape obstacle avoidance mean the Air 3S is capable of safe operation at night and – thanks to a robust set of ND filters – can produce sharp and dynamic images even in the middle of the day.

Weighing in at only 724g of takeoff weight, the DJI Air 3S makes for a neat addition to any camera bag that allows amateurs and pros alike to safely take to the skies, at a price point that is very much down to earth.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Out of the box, the DJI Air 3S is a new sight but similar feeling for veteran users of DJI products: a neatly packaged bundle of drone, remote controller, parts and accessories, immaculately presented and well-built. Opting for the Fly More Combo kit, in addition to the Air 3S, you're presented with the DJI RC 2 featuring a 5.5-inch 1080p 700-nit high-bright screen, an ND filter set, two additional batteries, a battery charging hub and a shoulder bag.

All seasoned drone pilots are well-familiar with the necessity of keeping batteries charged. With the Air 3S, even this routine task (and the first port of call after unboxing) is a pleasure.

The Air 3S's Battery Charging Hub supports PD fast charging and a "power accumulation function", allowing the transfer of the remaining power of multiple low-power batteries into the battery with the highest remaining power. A neat green status light on each battery indicates charging status as the hub charges each of them sequentially.

While the batteries and RC charge via USB-C, you can get well-acquainted with the drone itself. Popping the cap off the gimbal reveals two vertically-mounted lenses – a 1-inch CMOS primary camera (50MP) for landscapes and wide shots and a 1/1.3-inch CMOS medium telephoto camera (48MP) with 70mm lens, ideal for portraits and close-up shots. Both cameras support up to 14 stops of dynamic range.

As with most drones in the DJI lineup, the Air 3S's arms come neatly folded but satisfyingly pop into place when unfolded.

IMAGING

Like its little sibling, the Air 3, and bigger sibling, the Mavic 3 Pro, the Air 3S is capable of very impressive shooting quality. The primary camera shoots 4K/60fps HDR and 4K/120fps video and 10-bit D-Log M colour mode, with the medium tele camera supporting the same video specs for consistent footage.

The "free Panorama" mode creates seamless, expansive panoramic shots and improved video compression in the Air 3S has reduced file sizes by 30% without losing quality. 2.7K vertical shooting, MasterShots, QuickShots, and Hyperlapse are all supported.

Included in both the Fly More combo kits is an ND filter set (ND8/32/128) allowing for further creativity in a variety of lighting conditions.

The ND filters clip on easily and once you've paired this with your fully charged batteries and navigated the sign-up process either in the app on your phone or on-screen in the case of the RC2, you're good to take flight.

Ergonomically and interface-wise, the Air 3S will be a familiar sight and sound to previous DJI pilots as the commands and button layouts are all largely unchanged or at the very least reminiscent of previous builds. The 700-nit high-bright screen of the RC2 is impressively bright even in broad daylight and is tack sharp, allowing you to get a good sense of the quality of imagery that the drone is capturing.

SAFETY, ASSISTANCE & SUBJECT TRACKING

The Air 3S is the first DJI drone to feature forward-facing LiDAR, while also sporting a downward infrared time-of-flight (ToF) sensor and six vision sensors. This array of sensors gives the Air 3S what DJI calls "nightscape omnidirectional obstacle sensing", allowing it to automatically identify and avoid obstacles during its flight and return paths.

While the Air 3S sports technically advanced safety features, it also brings similar specs to its shooting assistance features like tracking. ActiveTrack 360° keeps subjects in frame, even with partial obstructions, and a new subject focusing feature keeps subjects in sharp focus, even during manual flight. Flight automation is also possible with Waypoint Flight and Cruise Control allowing preset flight paths and camera actions.

TRANSMISSION & STORAGE

We've all been there. Standing on the water's edge at sunrise, batteries fully charged, not a breath of wind and… SD card still sitting on the desk at home. A stand-out spec for the Air 3S is its internal storage. In comparison with the Air 3's and Mavic 3 Pro's 8gb, the Air 3S can store a much

ABOVE: An aerial angle over the NSW Central Coast Hinterland. DJI Air 3S. 1/30s @ f1.8, ISO 100.

more practical 42gb for those ah-dang-I-left-the-SD-at-home moments. Powered by DJI O4 FHD technology, video transmission is supported for 1080p/60fps up to 20 km. The Air 3S also supports file transfers to smartphones or computers, even when the drone is powered off.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The DJI Air 3S builds on its predecessors in several ways; offering improved image quality, enhanced safety and operability and never-before-seen features in DJI drones, making this new addition to the family testament to DJI's ongoing innovation.

LiDAR offers a significant leap in mitigating the risk of collision for the Air 3S, which will undoubtedly make this model even more attractive to prospective first-time drone pilots or anyone wanting to shoot at night. And the dual focal lengths will similarly open doors for photo and video creatives alike, who are looking for the angles and compressed perspective of a mid-range telephoto.

Priced sharply, the Air 3S offers great bang for buck for the amateur or prosumer budget. For not a huge dent in your savings, you can enjoy some cool tech features and a very enjoyable user experience, as you find literally new heights to your creativity. ✪

RESULTS

SCORE

8

HANDLING ★★★★

The Air 3S is very safe to fly, with collision-avoidance features in abundance.

FEATURES ★★★★

Much innovation from DJI, as always. Something new, even for DJI veterans.

BUILD QUALITY ★★★★

Feels great, looks great and a pleasure to use.

IMAGE QUALITY ★★★★

As good as an entry-level drone gets, but it's still no Leica.

VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★

With an RRP of $1,699, it's hard to beat at this price point.

FINAL WORD

Fantastic value for money and dazzling innovation make the Air 3S a real joy to use. This is a great option for a first drone, but will also satisfy enthusiasts looking for an upgrade from previous models.

SPECS

Sensor	Wide-Angle Camera: 1-inch CMOS, 50MP Effective Pixels Medium Tele Camera: 1/1.3-inch CMOS, 48MP Effective Pixels
Video	Wide-Angle Camera/ Medium Tele Camera: H.264/H.265 4K: 3840×2160@24/25/30/48/50/60/120fps
Weight	724g
Max flight time	45 minutes
Max speed	21-27m/s
Max Flight Distance	32km
Internal storage	42gb
Price	From $1,699
More info	dji.com

PATIENCE, LITTLE ONE

A chance to return to her homeland allowed this photographer the chance to explore the unique photo opportunities she'd always dreamed of.

WITH MARTIE LABUSCHAGNE

Growing up in South Africa one tends to forget how lucky we are with animals on our doorstep. To be able to visit a national park or a neighbouring country and take photos becomes second nature. In fact, it's only when you move away you realise how privileged you are to be living in a place like it.

We moved to Australia in 2018 and always wanted to go back to South Africa, Namibia and Botswana for a photo tour. In 2024 we finally made it happen, and we were fortunate enough to visit these three countries for a 2.5-month camping adventure.

Our journey started in Johannesburg with a few days visiting family and friends and then we headed to Etosha National Park in Namibia before travelling through the Caprivi strip to the Chobe National Park in Botswana. From here, we travelled back to South Africa, concluding our trip with a visit to the Kruger National Park in South Africa before returning home.

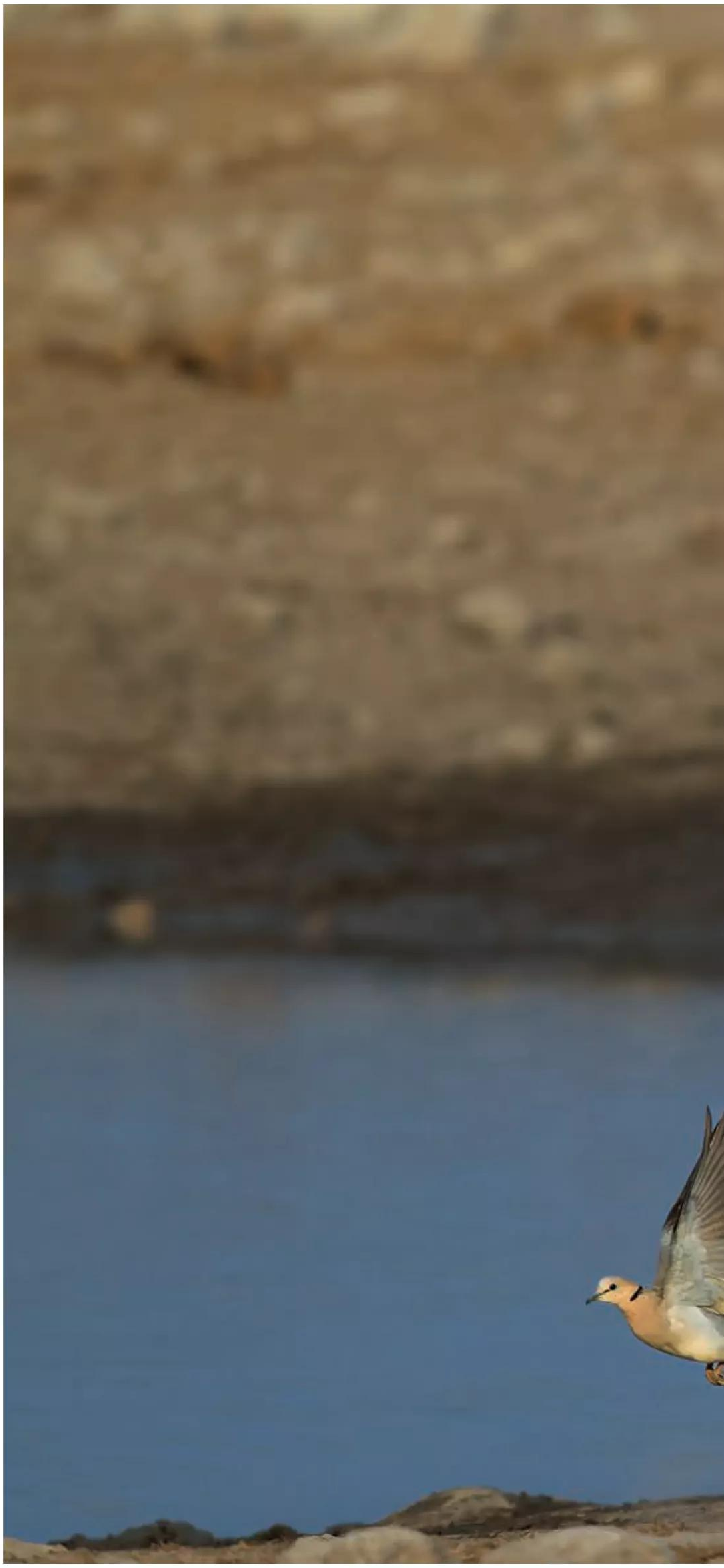
Throughout our trip, the one animal we encountered the most and intrigued us the most were the elephants, and I took as many photos of them as I could, especially the little ones.

From all my elephant images I captured I chose this one. It was taken in Etosha late in the afternoon. We spent a few hours at our favourite waterhole, Klein Namutoni, waiting for animals to get to the dwindling water and quench their thirst. It was a quiet afternoon, and at the last moment a small herd approached for a drink.

After drinking for a while, the elephants had their usual bath and walked off to have a dust bath about 20 metres away from the water.

This youngster got left behind and when it realised it was the only one still at the water it started running in the direction of mum and the herd. Luckily it had to run around the water's edge to catch them. I got a few shots as it got out of the water, and this one stood out for me due to the two doves taking flight and the water still gushing from its trunk. The light was amazing and the wet and dry parts of the youngster gave a beautiful contrast. ✪

NIKON Z9, NIKON 180-600MM LENS @ 600MM. 1/4000S @ F7.1, ISO 2200.

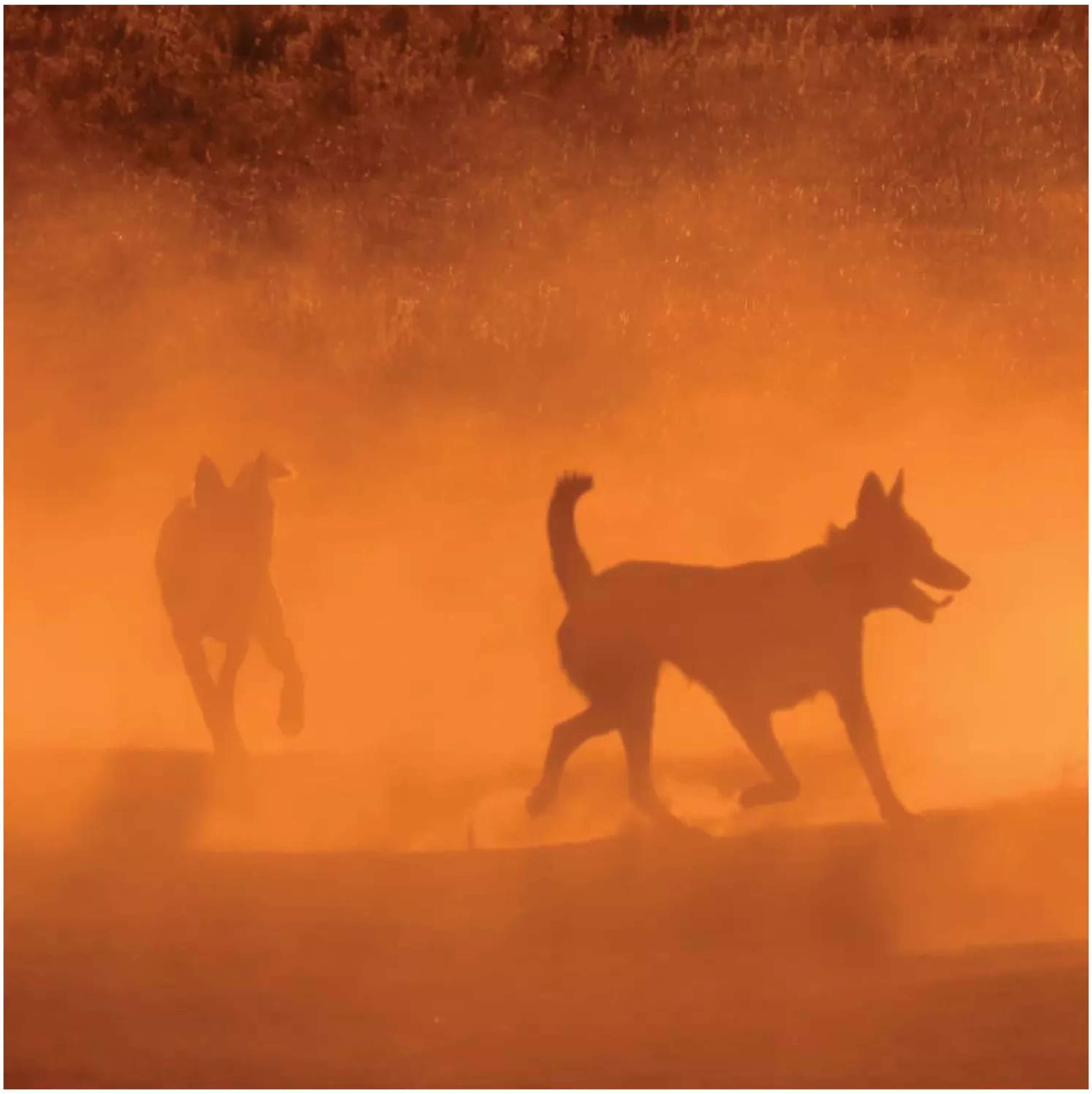


THE AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

Membership with the Australian Photographic Society caters for enthusiasts, amateurs and professionals in photography.

The APS can help you improve your photography, increase your level of satisfaction and achievement with your images, and make lasting friendships with other photographers throughout Australia. All that is required is that you take two steps; the first, joining the society; the second, becoming involved in what it has to offer.

Find out more at a-p-s.org.au



LEFT: Dusty run by Helen Carpenter.

THE JOURNEY OF WHILE THE WORLD WAITS

Two years ago, I stepped outside my comfort zone and took a leap of faith I never thought would pay off.

WITH HELEN CARPENTER

I had submitted an EOI for a photo series called 'Dust' in the *While the World Waits* collective exhibition, an event put together by Arts OutWest. And much to my surprise, my work was chosen to be one of 20 artists from 12 local government areas from the Central West of NSW.

The exhibition aimed to reflect on the challenges posed by COVID-19 with each artist presenting their unique take on how the pandemic had influenced our lives and surroundings. It was an adventure that unfolded before me.

For a couple of years, *While the World Waits* took me on a journey spanning vast distances in the Central West to showcase our artworks to many communities. The exhibition reached its peak in August 2024, marking the conclusion with the final exhibition at the Fountain Court of the NSW Parliament.

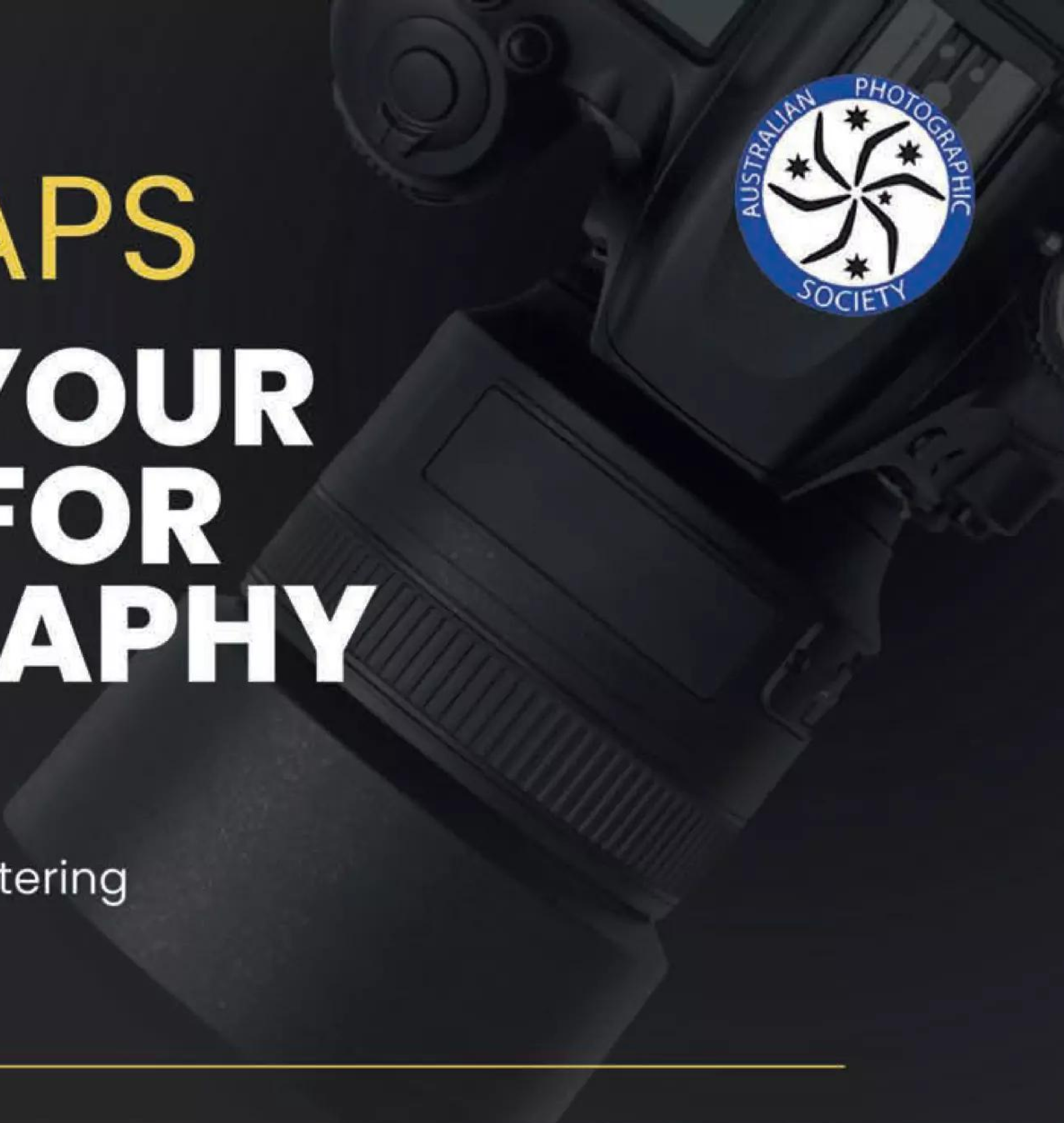
I had never imagined my photographs would grace such a prestigious setting and be admired by countless visitors. It was surreal, truly humbling and filled me with pride; it served as a powerful reminder of how photography as an art has the ability to surpass barriers and forge meaningful connections with people. It was also special to see so many people share my photos on their social media, from members of parliament to visitors passing through the doors and appreciating the artworks.

This exhibition and the journey these photos have been on has broadened my perspective through which I perceive and understand the world. Listening to individuals share their personal connections with my photographs has enriched my comprehension of the subjective essence of artistic expression.

What captures one person's heart may evoke distinct emotions, or another individual may see something entirely different, and therein lies the enchantment of photography as a creative field.

Reflecting on these past two years fills me with gratitude, for pushing past my doubts and submitting my work despite feeling unsure. I am grateful to Arts OutWest and curator Steven Cavanagh, along with my fellow artists, the communities and audiences who have shown their support for the *While the World Waits* exhibition.

Now, *While the World Waits* has come to an end and my photos have come home. In 2022 they visited 12 venues, travelled 2,312kms and had 6,126 visitors, in 2023 they travelled 1,152kms and had 1,592 visitors, and in 2024, the final exhibition saw an estimated 3,000 people see the exhibition. So, take a chance, have a go, step outside your comfort zone, and you never know where it will lead. ✪



Join the APS

INDULGE YOUR PASSION FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

A not for profit organisation catering to enthusiasts, amateurs and professionals in photography.

Image: “Speared” by Allan Rose FAPS - GOLD Winner - 4 Nations 2024 Individual Awards APS - Nature

HONOURS & DISTINCTIONS

APS offers a range of honours starting at the Licentiateship level and progressing to Grand Master and even beyond for exceptional photographers. APS also administers applications from Australian residents for FIAP Distinctions which are internationally recognised.

SHARE YOUR IMAGES

Share your passion for taking pictures. APS members can share their images by participating in online folios, using the Critique Room for positive feedback on your images in addition to entering APS endorsed National and International exhibitions.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

From first time camera users, through to experienced amateur’s, camera club members, semi-professional, emerging and professional photographers the APS has a range of benefits and activities that appeals to all levels.

www.a-p-s.org.au

IMAGE DOCTOR

Images need a pick-me-up?
The doctor will see you now.

BY ANTHONY MCKEE

THIS MONTH'S WINNER

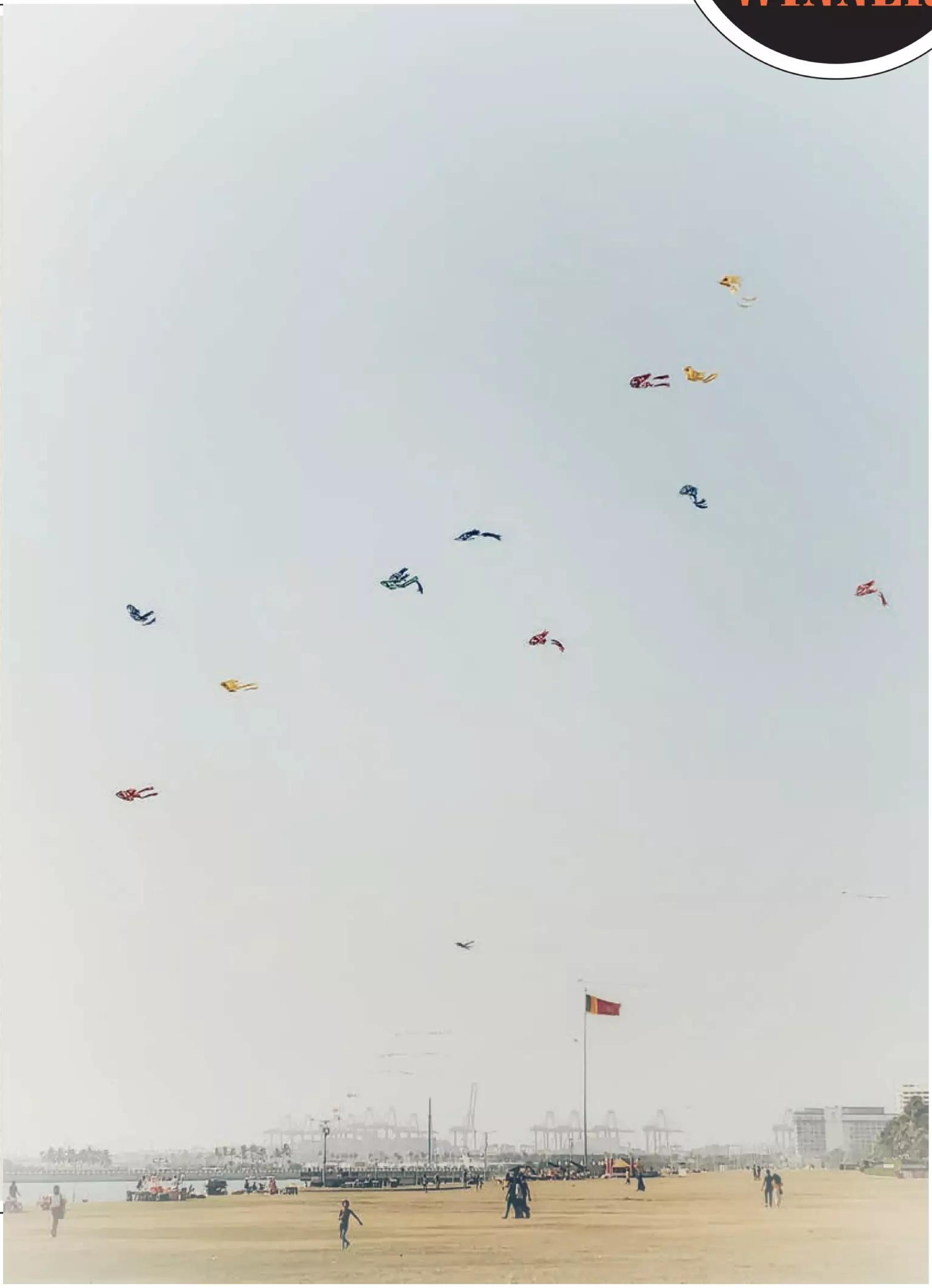
LEVERAGE YOUR PHONE'S DOF

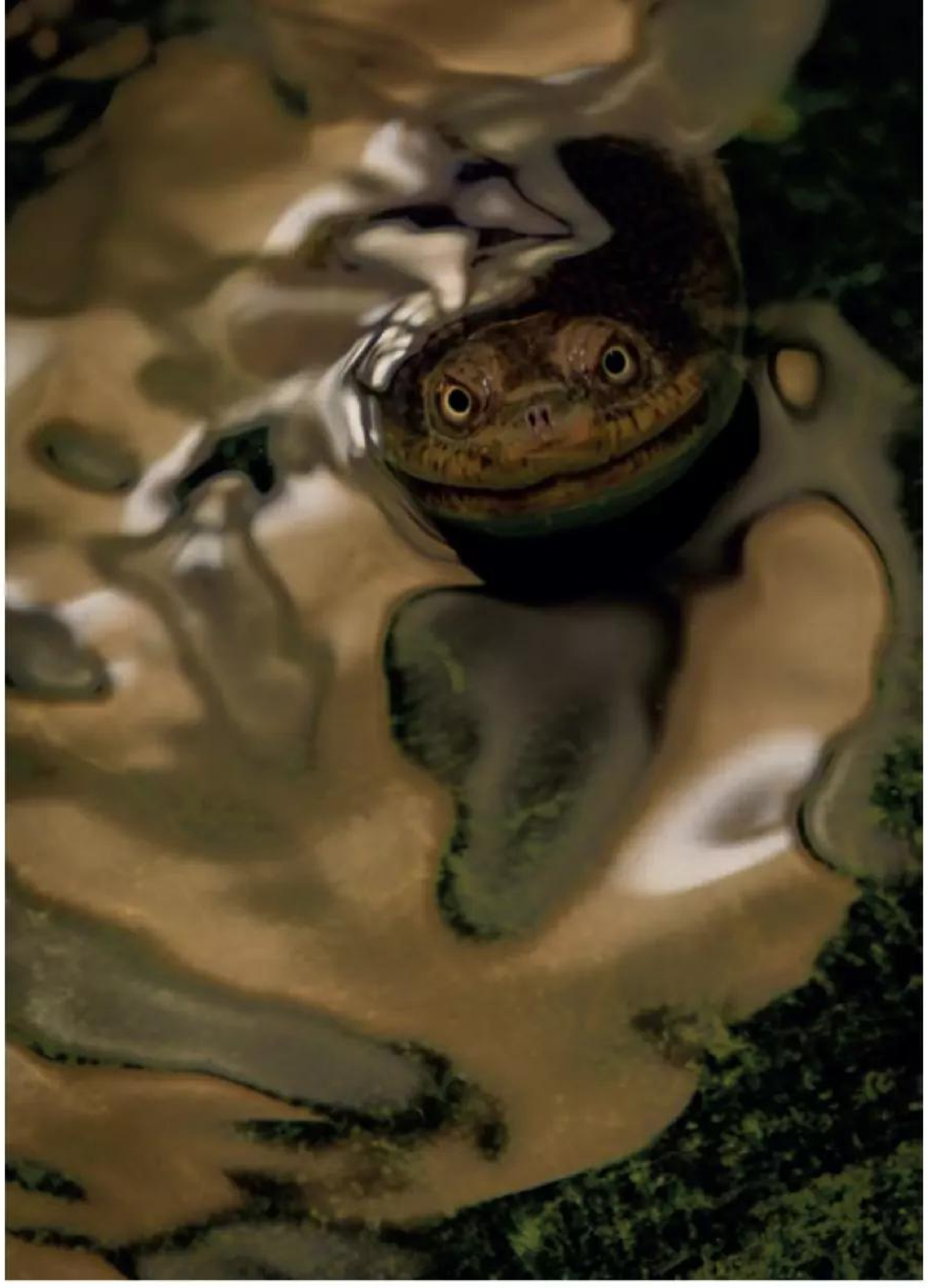
"I was walking back to my hotel on our last day in Sri Lanka, and while looking at the kite sellers along Galle Face Green, I noticed the young boy flying his own small kite on the drying grass area. With only my phone on me, I took a few shots. I thought a high key feel would work so edited and cropped some buildings on the right in Snapseed and was happy with it. I'm not usually a fan of filters, however I thought it works in this big open vista. I'd like to hear your take on it."

ANTHONY'S TIP: Hi Keith, smartphones and their creative filters can make for great photos, but you do need to appreciate the effect they have on the original image as you use them. The first thing I noticed with this photo was that the corners are bright (what we would call a negative vignette), and this has the effect of drawing a viewer's eyes away from the main subjects. Personally, I would be inclined to go back to the original photo and rework the image, but this time I would be more mindful of the edges.

On another note, one advantage of smartphone cameras is that they do have exceptionally good depth of field. In a situation like this I would get close to one of the kite fliers (even one holding their kite), I would put the camera at ground level and then I would shoot upwards to create a portrait of the person with the kites flying in the sky behind them. Next time!

TITLE: Fly my way
PHOTOGRAPHER: Keith Brown
DETAILS: Samsung Galaxy S10, 1/3200s @ f2.4, ISO 50.





POP YOUR HEAD INTO LIGHTROOM

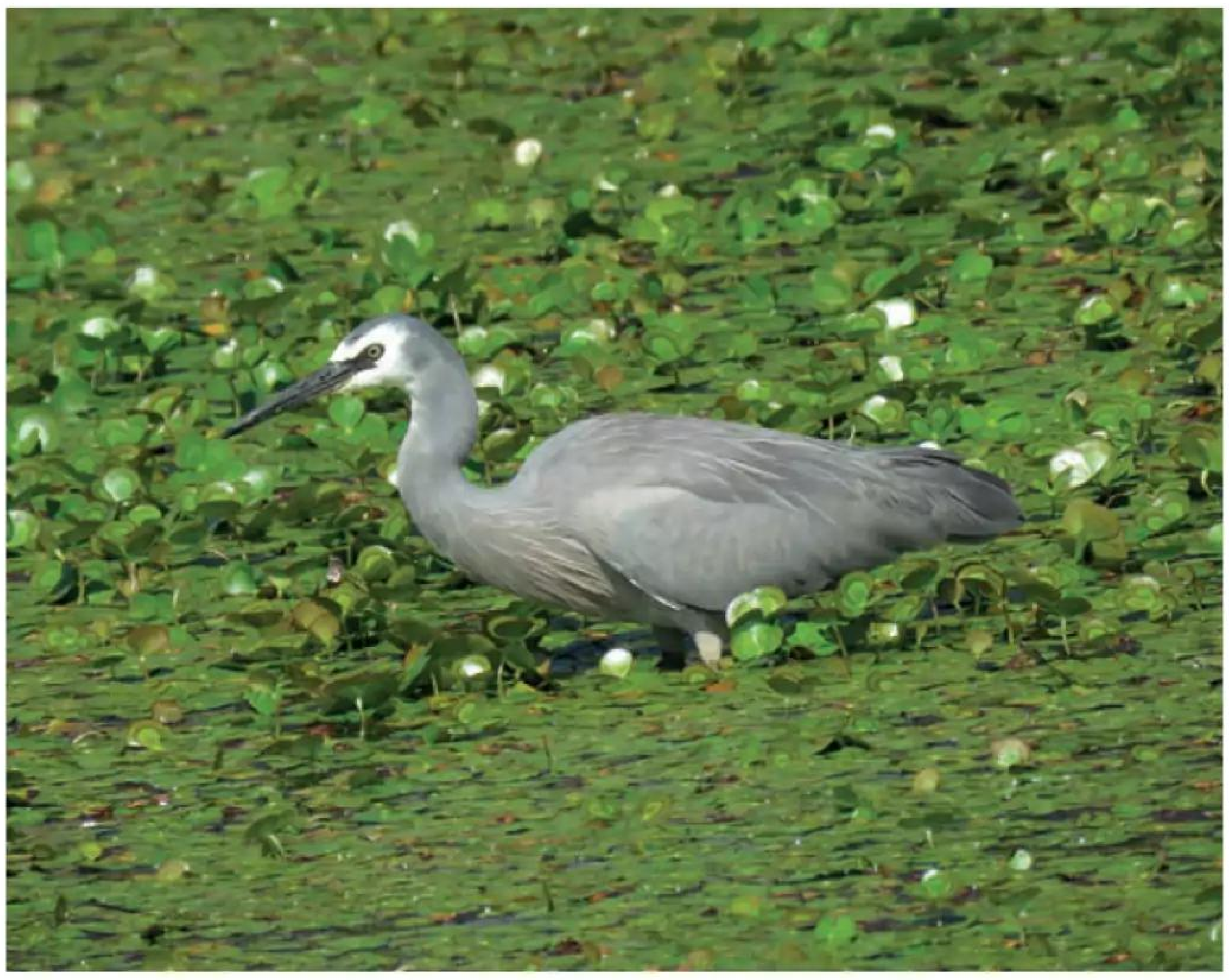
“This image of a turtle was captured in captivity at Discover Deadly in Western Australia. I was experimenting with my new Canon camera and lens, and this turtle was the only subject not behind glass.”

ANTHONY’S TIP: Hi Troy, thanks for sending in this image. Often photographers will make an image, and while there is nothing actually wrong with the capture itself (the composition and technique are all good), it is actually the finished image that needs some adjusting. In this case, the one thing that I would adjust is the brightness of the turtle’s head.

If you shot this image in RAW then I would go back to the original file, and in processing it I would use an adjustment mask to gently lighten the face by about +0.5 to +1.0 stops. If you made the image as a JPEG, use the Selection Tool in Photoshop to select the turtle’s head (using about a 20 pixel feather), and then use the Curves adjustment to gently brighten the face (do this by carefully nudging the Curves line upwards slightly).

While amateur photographers are often reluctant to make adjustment to their images, the fact is that most professional photographers make adjustments to nearly every photo they make. Don’t be scared to do some exploring in post!

TITLE: Peek-a-Boo
PHOTOGRAPHER: Troy Hurd
DETAILS: Canon 5D Mk IV, Canon EF 24-70mm f2.8 II USM lens @ 70mm. 1/125s @ f/2.8, ISO 1600.



A SUBTLE STRAIGHTENING

“As soon as I arrived at the wetlands on a beautiful spring afternoon, my eye was drawn to this White-faced Heron wading in the lily pads. I like the colour palette in this photograph – shades of grey and green with dashes of white and black.”

ANTHONY’S TIP: Hi Ann, one of the great challenges in photography is getting the “horizontal” correct. This is rather easy if you can see the horizon in the distance but it is harder when you are shooting downwards and have no reference to the horizon. My feeling when I first saw this image was that it is tilted towards the left. All I would do to improve it is to use the crop tool to rotate the image about 10-degrees clockwise and suddenly this heron will be back on the straight and level again.

Your camera might not have the feature, but nowadays many DSLR and mirrorless cameras have a built in “spirit-level” (also described as an artificial horizon) that lets you see when your camera is on the level. It is a handy feature that I use a lot, even for portrait photography.

TITLE: White-faced Heron
PHOTOGRAPHER: Ann Somerville-Charles
DETAILS: Canon PowerShot SX60HS. 1/500s @ f5.6, ISO 100.

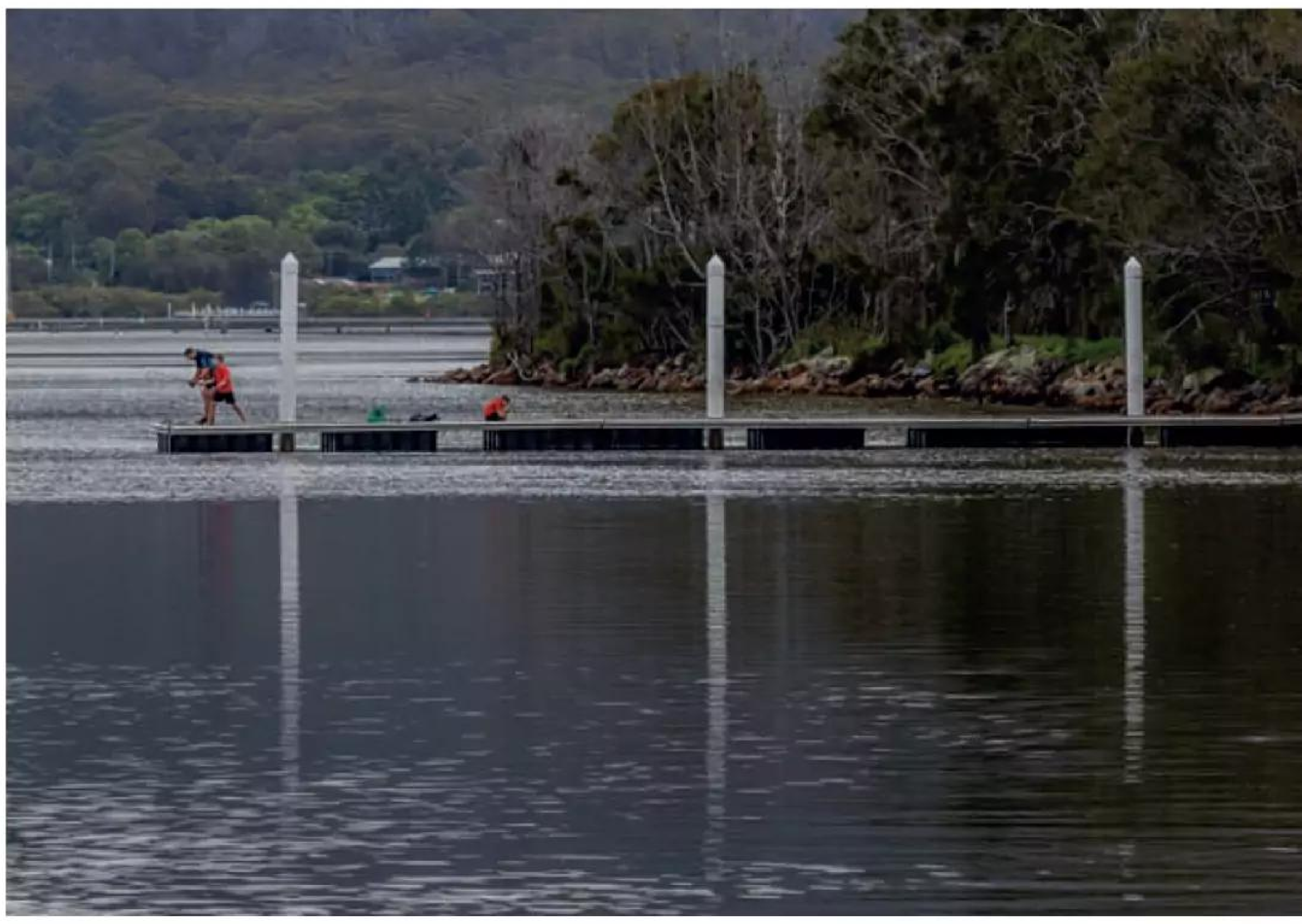
GET CLOSE AND BRIGHTEN

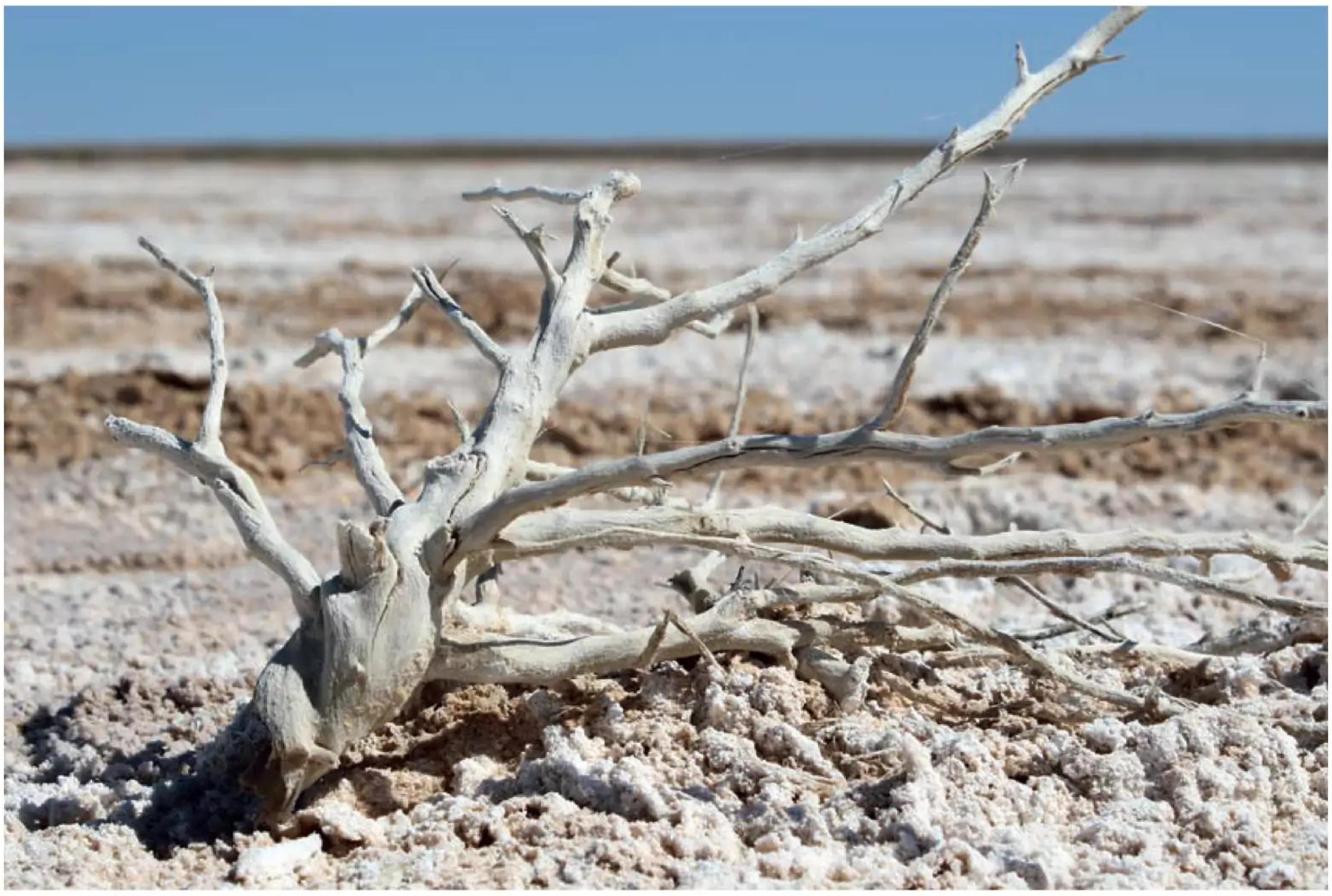
“My wife and I left South Africa to be with our children in Australia about three years ago and as one of them lived in North Haven we decided to start there. Fell in love with the place and we will probably settle here.”

ANTHONY’S TIP: Hi Rob, most of the action within this photo is happening at the far left of that jetty where you have the father and son, but to some extent we are struggling to see them in the shot. For this reason I would have made the photo at the 400mm end of your 100-400mm lens rather than the 220mm focal length that you used. The other option is to crop this image – I’d position those two left poles on the left and right thirds of your frame and this will position that second boy in the middle of the photo (and that's OK).

The next thing I would be doing to this image is to lighten the photo. Ideally you would do this while processing the RAW file, but another option is to open the JPEG in your editing app, select curves and then drag the middle of the curve (this is the straight line running diagonally across the graph) upwards slightly. This will lighten the mid-tones of the image and make it far more interesting.

TITLE: Father and Son
PHOTOGRAPHER: Rob Taylor
DETAILS: Canon 6D Mk II, 100-400mm lens @ 220mm. 1/640s @ f9, ISO 1000.





COULD A FOCUS STACK WORK?

"I'm a 68-year-old woman who loves capturing the world around me with my camera. I recently had the opportunity to travel across the Simpson Desert, and the ever-changing scenery was breathtaking. We stopped in one of many salt pans between the dunes, and while walking about, came across the remains of this whitewashed shrub. I had to have this image of the struggle this plant had had to grow; there wasn't another plant within 100 metres. I took many photos on this trip, and this image is one of my favourites."

ANTHONY'S TIP: Hi Nina, you mention that there were no other plants within 100 metres of this struggling shrub, so here is where I think I would have treated this image differently – I probably would have tried to get everything in focus for this picture, from the shrub through to the horizon line. Depth of field was never going to make this happen (I noticed you made the photo at f13) so I would have used a technique called focus stacking. Mount the camera on a tripod (or rest it on a bag) and then make several exposures while adjusting the focus each time; start by photographing the foreground and then keep making photos as you adjust the focus outwards until you get the horizon. Then use Photoshop to stack and align the photos and then blend the images into one sharp shot. It is actually a simple technique but the effect can be dramatic. Keep at it!

TITLE: For Want of Water
PHOTOGRAPHER: Nina Horvath
DETAILS: Canon 7D, EF-S 18-55mm lens @ 49mm.
1/320s @ f13, ISO 100.

WIN! 12 MONTH SUBSCRIPTION TO AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHY OR CAPTURE MAGAZINE

Congratulations to Keith Brown who has won a 12-month subscription to either *Australian Photography* or *Capture* magazine for taking out Image Doctor this month! *AP* has been celebrating the work of Australian photographers for more than 70 years. Published quarterly, *Capture* is Australia's leading journal for emerging and professional photographers.

Find out more about AP at australianphotography.com, and Capture at capturemag.com.au

HOW TO SUBMIT AN IMAGE

- Email entries to: imagedoctor@australianphotography.com with "Image Doctor" in the subject line.
- Include your name, image title and up to 150 words about how you created it.
- Only one image per person per month.
- Images must be saved in JPEG format. Maximum file size is 5MB. Include your name in the filename of the image.
- An Australian address is required in order to receive the prize.
- Employees of Yaffa Publishing or the sponsor are not eligible to win the prize.
- The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

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WORLD PHOTO ADVENTURES

Leal Lodge
BEAUTY POINT
TASMANIA

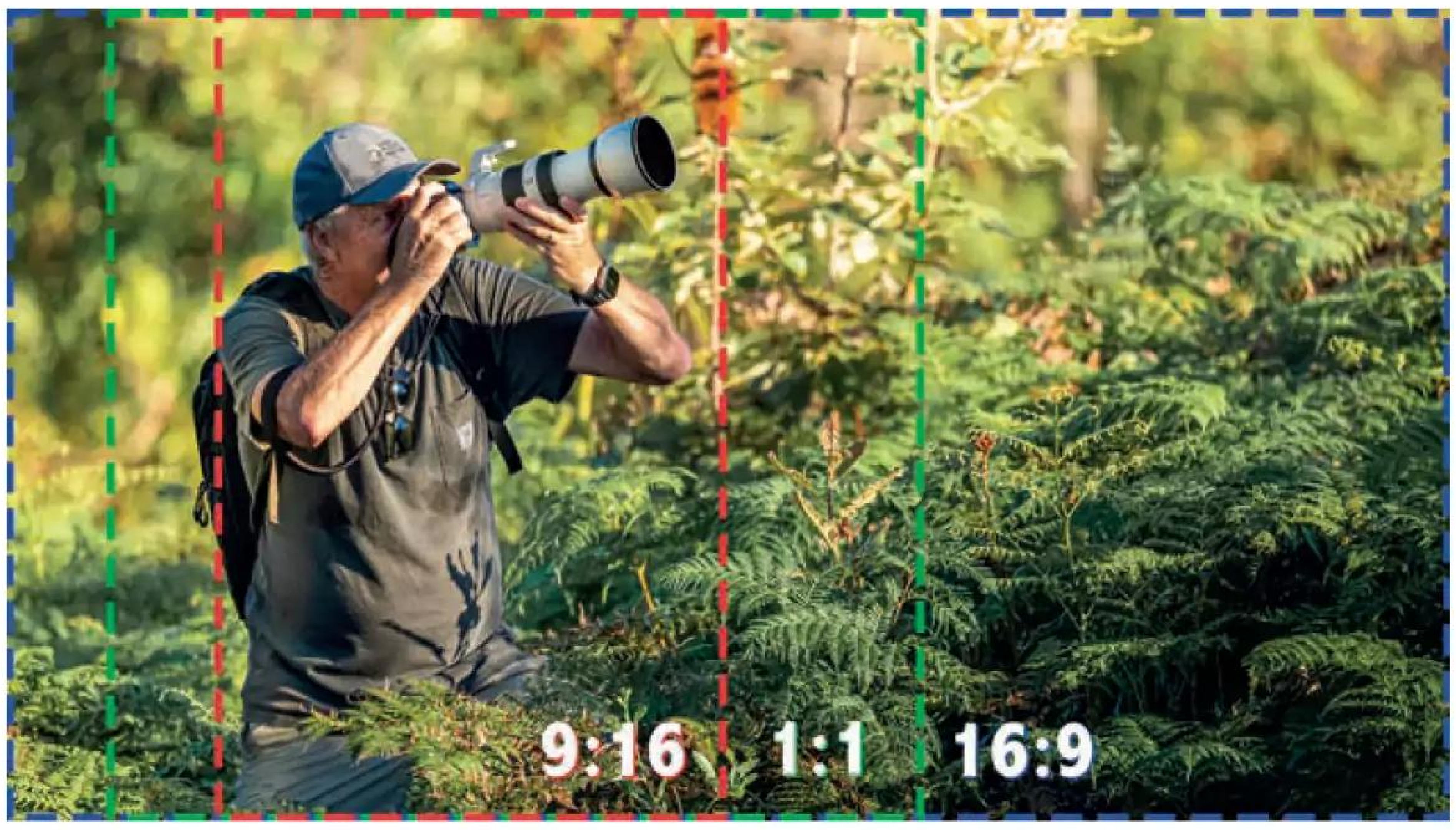
UNDERSTANDING ASPECT RATIOS

BY TIM ROBINSON

In photography you can capture an image in either a horizontal or vertical orientation. However for many years, in traditional videography the horizontal aspect was the only choice – but not anymore!

WHAT SHOULD YOU CHOOSE?

Personally, I prefer the horizontal orientation (16:9) for video. It presents your image the way our eyes would naturally see the world. It allows you to fit a wide scene into your frame, and it looks fantastic on any screen. If you are primarily displaying your video on a TV or a platform like YouTube, this is your best option.



VERTICAL VIDEO (9:16)

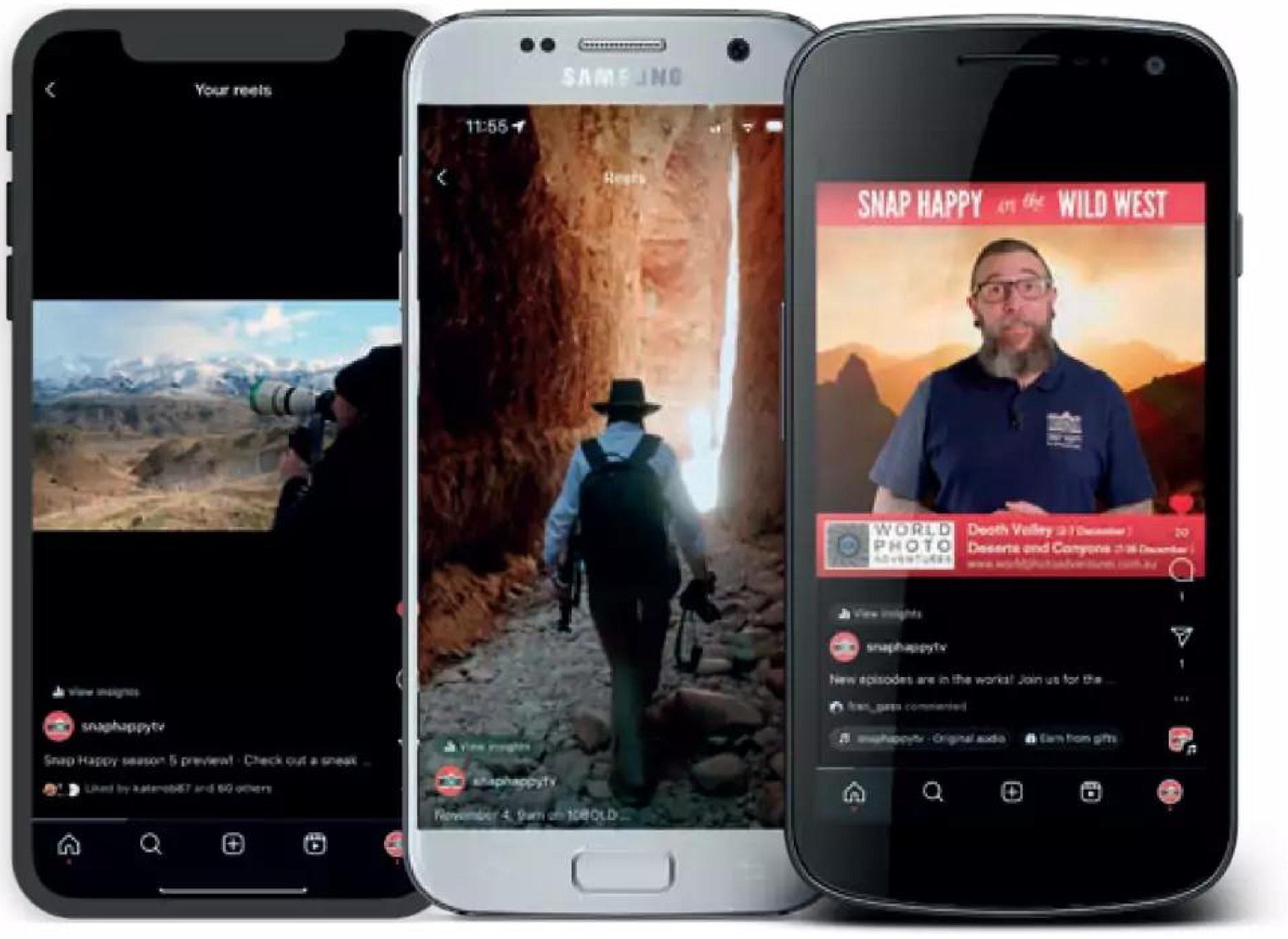
So why would you choose to shoot video in a vertical (9:16) orientation? If you plan to share your video on a platform like Instagram or TikTok this is the native aspect ratio. Your content will be optimised to fill the screen of any mobile device and will look as it should on these platforms. If you upload video in a horizontal orientation, then your video will appear smaller on the screen.

ARE THERE OTHER OPTIONS?

When I post online, I also love to crop my videos to a square format (1:1). This essentially gives the best of both worlds – maintaining a more natural look and using more space on the screen of a mobile device than a 16:9 video. You might even consider putting a graphic at the top or bottom of your frame so that your video is square, but your video still conforms to the 9:16 vertical aspect ratio.

THE WRAP-UP

If you are unsure of where you plan to share your video, then I suggest shooting horizontally and in a high resolution. This will make it usable across platforms, as a horizontal video can easily be cropped to fit a vertical frame. Just remember to capture everything with a wider angle of view so that you allow for the crop factor. ✪



ABOVE: Your choice of aspect ratio will make a big difference to how it appears on a smartphone. Make sure you make the right one!

2025

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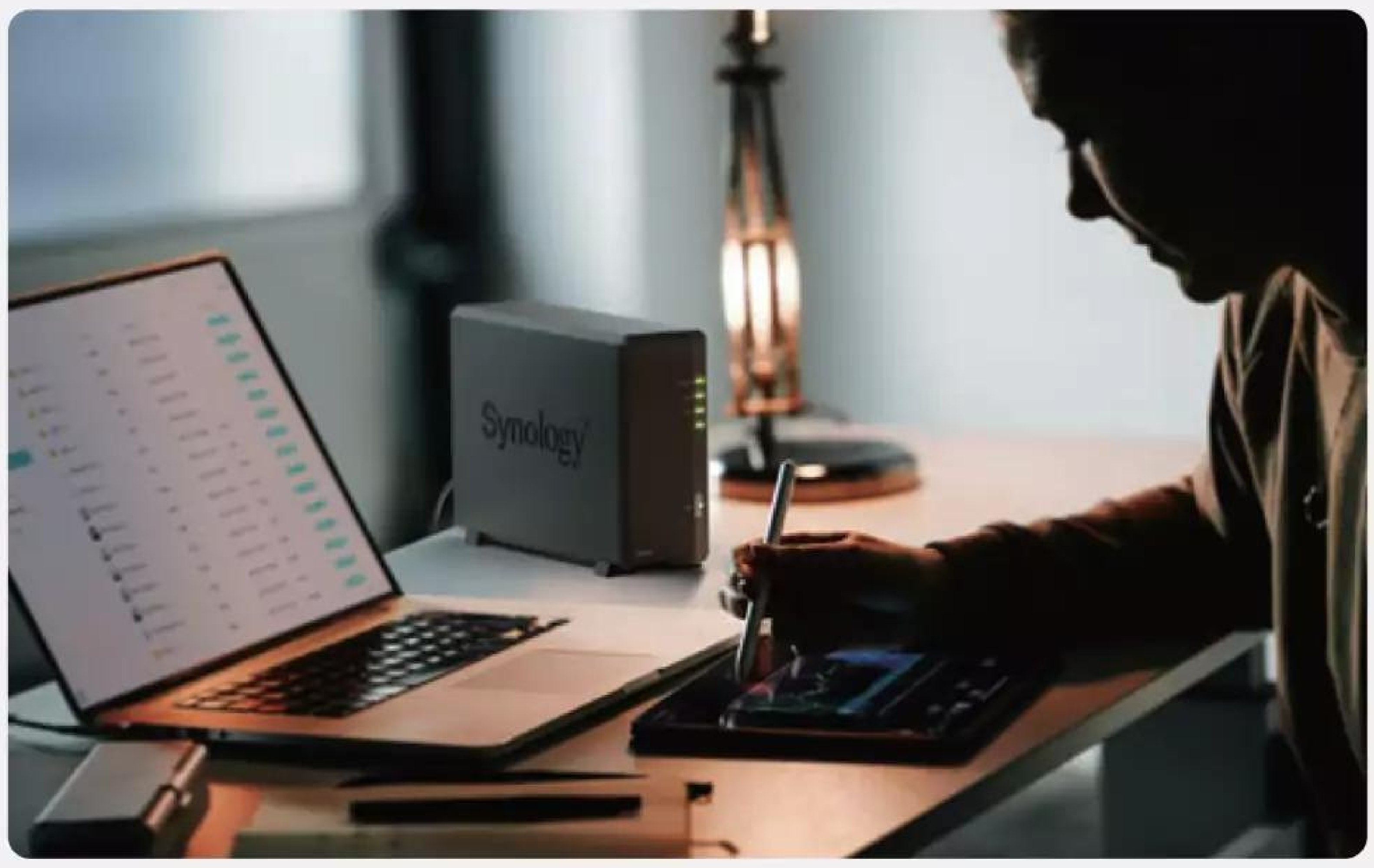

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